

THE PACIFIC  
ITS PAST & FUTURE  
GUY H. SCHOLEFIELD



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THE PACIFIC  
ITS PAST AND FUTURE



# THE PACIFIC ITS PAST AND FUTURE

AND

THE POLICY OF THE GREAT POWERS  
FROM THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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WITH MAPS

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1919

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TO MY WIFE

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## ABBREVIATIONS

P.P.	.	.	.	PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.
N.Z.	.	.	.	NEW ZEALAND.
AUST.	.	.	.	AUSTRALIA (COMMONWEALTH).
N.S.W.	.	.	.	NEW SOUTH WALES.
SEN. DOCS.	.	.	.	SENATE DOCUMENTS, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
C. AND CD.	.	.	.	COMMAND PAPERS PRESENTED TO THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.
P.R.O.	.	.	.	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.



## INTRODUCTION

THIS volume was intended to be a short history of British policy in the Pacific, a policy which has been very little understood and very much misunderstood. But British policy is so much interwoven with that of the other great powers that the scope of the book was necessarily widened to embrace the whole subject.

That the atmosphere of a great war is not the best for the historical treatment of questions in which more than one of the belligerents is involved, is evident from the common disposition on the part of recent writers to interpret the past policy of Germany in the light of what she has done since. It must be confessed, however, that German diplomacy in 1884 and in 1914 exhibits the same general character. Another temptation which the author has endeavoured to resist is that of digressing into certain of the more interesting aspects of the subject in greater detail than the limits of the volume will permit. He can only hope that such engrossing economic problems as Asiatic emigration and the relationship of the two Far Eastern powers with Europe will be treated historically by some future student.

As regards authorities, it is unfortunate that in the vast mass of interesting, and often able, material on the Pacific, that which comes from the heroic missionaries—Protestants and others—whose labours in the Pacific inspire so much admiration, has in many cases to be accepted with the caution due to partisan sources. Only selected works of this nature have been consulted. The Blue Books of Great Britain and the Colonies have been a most valuable source of information. As a general rule such sources are unimpeachable and conclusive, and on that account one cannot but regret the somewhat frequent occurrence, especially in the contentious period 1882-7, of the legend

"Not Printed," indicating that certain despatches are withheld from publication.

In these days it is customary to condemn secret diplomacy. But it is hard to avoid the suspicion that in the eighties of last century a certain measure of secret diplomacy was actually practised towards the colonies. It is scarcely possible to believe that the Blue Books of the time disclose to the colonies all that passed between the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office. It is difficult to believe that two members of a Cabinet could have worked so utterly at cross purposes as Granville and Derby in 1884-5. And it is an interesting conjecture whether there is in existence to-day the machinery which will absolutely prevent a recurrence of transactions so prejudicial to the good relations of the Empire amongst its own parts.

It only remains to express one's constant indebtedness to the classical work of Mr H. E. Egerton, Beit Professor of Colonial History at Oxford, and of Dr A. Berriedale Keith, of Edinburgh University (formerly of the Colonial Office), whose commentaries and documents on colonial history are invaluable.

GUY H. SCHOLEFIELD.

# THE PACIFIC ITS PAST AND FUTURE

## CHAPTER I

### THE ENTRY FROM EUROPE

**Navigators by Cape Horn.**—The gateway by which the European navigators came into the Pacific was for the most part the stormy one of Cape Horn. A few of them in the seventeenth century came from the west—Hartog, Pelsart and Tasman from the Dutch Indies—but the great majority of the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, and English seafarers who followed each other in successive waves came by the eastern gate past the sentry-post of the Falkland Islands. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the only European colonies actually in the Pacific were the Spanish possessions in the Philippines and the Carolines—colonies outplanted with splendid adventure over so many leagues of ocean by the Catholic viceroys of Mexico and Peru. We shall see later how little influence they exercised on Pacific policy in our time.

The early policy of the European powers in the Pacific was conditioned more by the routes of the Christian missionaries than by anything else. When the London Missionary Society sent forth its apostles in the pioneer ship *Duff* in 1796, it chose the route at once the most direct and, from the writings of Cook, the most familiar. The great navigator's picture of the Society Islands and other Polynesian groups appealed to the missionary spirit of the time, and the *Duff* made straight for these simple and attractive peoples and their benevolent climes. The settlement of these missionaries in Tahiti profoundly affected for fifty years to come the Pacific policy of Great Britain and France. With Christianity civilisation and order were

introduced, so that in a few decades there were in Polynesia several quasi-civilised kingdoms—Tahiti, Hawaii, and Tonga—enjoying a measure of international recognition, and managing their own affairs with a good deal of success. They were strong centres of English influence, but they remained outside the British Empire, partly because the missionaries desired to perpetuate a régime under which they were the virtual rulers, and partly because England declined to accept the proffered sovereignty over them.

**Geographical Spheres.**—The eastern half of the Pacific, to a distance of about 5000 miles from the coast of America, is practically devoid of islands. Almost the whole of the islands and the native population are to the westward of the 140th meridian of west longitude and most are to the southward of the equator. What are known as the Line Islands are of minor importance, and the groups to the northward—the Carolines, Marshalls, and Marianne Islands—have not played a very prominent part. The vast majority of the islands which figure in the history of European colonisation in the Pacific are within 2000 miles of the coasts of Australia and New Zealand. The more easterly of these, between the equator and 30 deg. S. lat. and between 135 deg. and 180 deg. W. long. constitute the Polynesian Archipelago, and are inhabited by the pleasant-mannered but naturally warlike race of whom the Maori of New Zealand, the Hawaiians, the Tahitians, the Tongans, and the Samoans are the best known branches. In Fiji the Polynesians blend with the more savage Melanesians, whose zone extends westward through all the islands to the Australian coast, and northwards of the equator. The northern part of Melanesia is sometimes called Micronesia.

The whalers and traders coming into the Pacific in the early days frequented particularly the eastern groups, whose economic significance otherwise was limited. They were outposts which were to come into prominence at a later stage of history—Hawaii when Japan rose to power and the United States developed interests in Asia; Tahiti and Tonga when the Panama Canal laid new steam lanes across the Pacific from the Atlantic to Australia, New Zealand, and the East. During the first half of the nineteenth century the Pacific slope of North America was unsettled, and had neither population nor trade. The American missionaries who civilised Hawaii actually came to those islands from the eastern states by way of Cape Horn. But it was in one of these eastern groups, Tahiti, that a native régime under

the influence of English Protestants, by opposing the intrusion of Roman Catholic priests, produced for England her first Pacific complication—with France.

**Settlement in the Western Pacific.**—While these interesting experiments in civilisation and native polity were working themselves out in the comparative isolation of the eastern zone, the inexorable processes of economy were busy in the western. In founding a penal settlement at Botany Bay in 1788 England had no intention whatever of colonising the continent of Australia. Her object was merely to establish a prison for incorrigibles as far from Europe as possible. The last two Georges and King William politely declined the picturesque offers of sovereignty which were made to them by chiefs all over the Pacific. They heard with unfeigned annoyance of the colonising activities of the French, by which they were compelled to enter, now here and now there, the caveat of their own British sovereignty. With overt impatience they witnessed the colonising impulses of their own people, who demanded homes and lands and ordered government in the wide ranges and temperate airs of Australia and New Zealand. But the free settlers insisted. White communities grew up and expanded all round the coasts of Australia and on the beaches of New Zealand. The authority of the British Navy was constantly invoked to protect or to control. The only actuating motive which the Government would admit was that of police; the only negative motive, jealousy of France. So it was that in spite of the British Government, real settlement flourished in Australia and New Zealand, and reluctantly British sovereignty had to be made complete over both countries.

**A Western Orientation.**—The scarcity of labour in Australia and Fiji soon led to the invasion of the neighbouring archipelagos in search of coolies (*kanakas*); and from this resulted an entirely new orientation of policy in the Pacific. The importance of the eastern zone and its problems waned, while those of the western grew and became more engrossing. Having entered the field as a mere expedient, Great Britain now, under missionary motives, first assumed the protectorship of the natives and the police of the seas, and eventually was compelled to provide her whole jurisdiction. Long before the missionary spirit had lost its driving power, the constructive prescience of the Australians and New Zealanders, filled with anxiety for their own social welfare, made new problems for England, with Germany in New



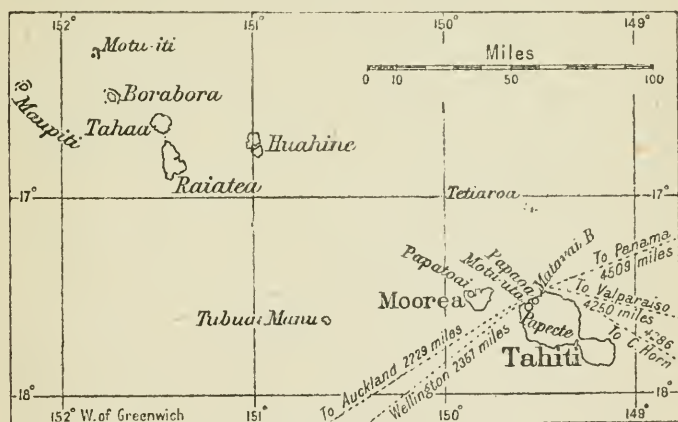
Guinea and Samoa, and with France in the New Hebrides. Yet historically the eastern Pacific takes precedence of the western.

Towards the middle of the century there was a strong belief in official circles that the commerce between Australia and the Far East would soon attain considerable proportions, and in view of this steps were taken by the Admiralty and by several Australian governments, first to survey and afterwards to defend the passages of Torres Straits. The expectation grew out of the circumstance that sailing ships taking cargoes and passengers from England to Australia were in the habit of proceeding thence to China and the East Indies for home cargoes. At the same time the vessels of the East India Company were constantly undertaking exploring voyages through the Moluccas, and out into the Pacific. But the promise of a close intercourse from north to south was not fulfilled, and even to-day the channels of the East Indian archipelago are not the most frequented routes of the Pacific.

## CHAPTER II

### TAHITI, THE MISSIONARY KINGDOM

**Discovery and Missionary Settlement.**—Tahiti is one of the most interesting studies in government in the Pacific. In its earlier stage it was a shining example of successful missionary government; in its later a deplorable illustration of British reluctance towards colonisation, involving the



abandonment not merely of material interests, but also of a healthy seat of British influence and culture.

Tahiti was discovered by H.M.S. *Dolphin* in 1767, when Captain Wallis hoisted the flag and took possession in the name of King George III. According to Wallis's account Queen Beria ceded her kingdom to England and he hoisted the flag at Matavai Bay on 23rd June, naming the island "King George the Third's Island." A few years later it was selected by the Royal Society as the point from which Cook should observe the transit of Venus. The great navigator visited the group on each of his three voyages.

He called the fertile and hospitable islands after the Royal Society, and his descriptions did much to capture the imagination of English people at the end of the eighteenth century. The effect was heightened by the appearance in England of his protégé, the young Tahitian chief, Omai.

Tyerman and Bennet tell us in their journals<sup>1</sup> that Roman Catholic missionaries came to Tahiti from Peru before 1797, but after several years' persevering labour despaired of the native character and abandoned the field. The London Missionary Society was founded in 1795, and it was on the recommendation of Dr Haweis (rector of All Saints', Aldwinkle, and chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon), that it decided to commence its work in the South Seas. On 10th August 1796 the ship *Duff* hoisted the mission flag—three white doves with olive branches on a purple field—and sailed from Blackwall.<sup>2</sup> She reached the South Seas early in 1797, and planted missions at Tahiti, the Friendly Islands, and the Marquesas. The missionaries were well received by the old king, Pomare, and his wife Idia; and by their own virtues and the influence which the crafts of their skilled artisans gained for them amongst the natives, they were soon firmly established. In 1809, however, as the result of civil war, they retired from the group, with the exception of two missionaries.

In 1812 the directors had almost decided to retire altogether, when the new Pomare, the old king's son, came voluntarily to Moorea and asked to be baptised. The same year the rebels in Tahiti invited him to return to his kingdom; and in 1815 the native idols on Moorea were spontaneously destroyed by their own people. Raiatea followed in the same year; and thenceforward English civilisation and Christianity spread rapidly through this and neighbouring groups, for it was the avowed object of the Society to spread civilised arts and crafts as a medium of promoting Christianity.

**Government by Missionaries.**—In his *Missionary Enterprise in the South Seas*, John Williams discusses in an interesting fashion the ethics of missionary interference with the civil life of native races. At the time when he wrote (1837) they had already been charged with assuming almost regal authority in Tahiti. This he stoutly

<sup>1</sup> *Journals and Travels of the Rev. D. Tyerman and Mr G. Bennet* 1831.

<sup>2</sup> *The Story of the L.M.S.*, by the Rev. C. Silvester Horne, 1895.

denies, while admitting frankly that a missionary who brings civilisation with him as the English Protestants did to the South Seas, cannot fail to be an adviser. "There are circumstances," he writes, "where he must step out of his ordinary course and appear more prominent than he would wish, for frequently a word from the missionary, rightly timed, will do more towards settling a dispute, healing a breach, burying an animosity or carrying a useful plan into execution than a whole year's cajoling of the natives themselves would have effected."

Commodore Wilkes, of the United States Navy, who visited Tahiti in 1839, says the missionaries then undoubtedly had great influence over the natives. "But I am satisfied," he adds, "that they are justly entitled to it. Indeed, I cannot but consider it as part of their duty, nay, the great object of their mission, to acquire and exercise a salutary control over their converts, both of high and low degree. My own observations satisfied me that this control is exerted solely for the purpose of fulfilling the laudable object for which they were sent. . . . We may, perhaps, lament their intolerance towards other sects, but no one can visit the island without perceiving on every side the most positive evidence of the great benefits they have already bestowed and are daily bestowing upon the inhabitants."<sup>1</sup>

Darwin reached the Pacific in 1835 under the influence of a rumour that the Tahitians had become a gloomy race, living in fear of the missionaries.<sup>2</sup> But of the truth of this he found no sign. On the contrary the Tahitians were unashamed of their Christianity, merry and happy. The wars which had been chronic during the heathen régime were a memory of the past.

**The Code of 1819.**—Having adopted Christianity, the Tahitians naturally looked to their teachers for advice in instituting civil government on European models. "The missionaries invariably told them," says Mr Ellis, "that it was no part of their original design to attempt any change in their political and civil institutions as such; that these matters belonged to the chiefs and governors of the people, and not to the teachers of the religion of Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup> However, they eventually promised to give the chiefs such assistance as they could in the preparation of a code of laws

<sup>1</sup> *Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition*, by Charles Wilkes, 1845.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of a Voyage Round the World*, by Charles Darwin, 1845.

<sup>3</sup> *Polynesian Researches*, by William Ellis, 1859.

and constitution of government, "but were exceedingly anxious that it should be the production of the king and chiefs, and not of themselves."

The first code of laws in the islands was that enacted in Tahiti in 1819 and promulgated in May at the opening of the Royal Mission Chapel. Owing to the king's rather autocratic manner and his jealousy of the chiefs, this code of eighteen articles was not quite what the missionaries desired, especially in regard to the limitations of a constitutional sovereign. But for the times and the people it was an excellent beginning. A year later, in May 1820, the neighbouring island of Raiatea adopted a code—an improvement on that of Tahiti—and this was adopted also for Tahaa, Borabora, and Maupiti. It included, at the instigation of the missionaries, the English system of trial by jury. Within another year Huahine had adopted the principles of the Raiatea laws as a basis for its own code, and here again the missionaries were asked to draft the laws. This code was promulgated in 1822; the Tahitian code was revised in 1824 and that of Huahine in 1826. Ellis leaves no room for doubt that all the codes were of missionary origin, and further that their promulgation greatly enhanced the influence of the missionaries.

The first act of policy by Great Britain towards Tahiti was possibly the concession of George IV. in 1821, when he remitted the customs duties on a cargo of South Sea produce contributed by Christian natives for the benefit of the funds of the London Missionary Society.<sup>1</sup>

**Law and Society.**—By 1822 the missionaries had really affected a considerable social improvement amongst the Tahitians. In May of that year the captain of the French corvette *La Coquille* appeared much surprised and delighted with the state of things, as compared with what he had expected from the writings of Cook, Bougainville, and other early visitors. Only a week earlier the annual missionary meeting was held at Huahine, and on the following day the missionaries presided when "the revised code of laws, corresponding in most respects with those adopted in the adjacent islands, was read and adopted after due discussion."

The deputation of the London Missionary Society gives a picture of the gathering of the chiefs and delegates at Mata'vai on 23rd February 1824, in a formal parliament of the Windward Isles to discuss and settle the laws. "The

<sup>1</sup> *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Seas*, by John Williams.



constitution of the islands," they write, "provided that the parliament shall consist of one house, wherein each person shall have one vote. The members were adult male branches of the royal family and of the principal chiefs—these being hereditary legislators; to which as popular representatives were added two of their own body out of the adult male inhabitants of each mataaina, or district, appointed by themselves."<sup>1</sup> The code contained about forty articles dealing with social order, public welfare, and rights of property. Trial by a jury of six peers followed the principle of British justice, and punishments for Sabbath-breaking illustrated the missionary influence of the parliament. For the same reason there was no punishment by death, and banishment was the expiation for murder.

A quite separate source of South Sea Island law was the harbour regulations proposed from time to time by the captains of British and American warships. The primary object was to facilitate victualling and refitting, to provide pilotage, and to check desertion. The regulations for Huahine, proposed by H.M.S. *Satellite* in 1829, are especially interesting, inasmuch as they record the presentation of a flag—three horizontal bars, red, white, and red—to the Georgian and Society Islands. This was another measure of recognition by Great Britain.<sup>2</sup>

On 21st April 1824, King Pomare III. was duly crowned at Papaoa. Only four years of age, the young sovereign was robed for the ceremony in the house of a missionary. Missionaries with judges walked at the head of the procession carrying a large Bible. The ceremony was conducted by a missionary, who handed the code of laws to the young king, explaining "the importance and advantage of being governed by just laws."<sup>3</sup>

In 1823 the Russian frigate the *Cruiser*, which had already visited Tahiti in 1820, again made her appearance. In entertaining the queen the commander hoisted a Tahitian flag and persuaded the natives to return the compliment by raising the Russian flag ashore. But they were shrewd enough, with their missionary advisers, not to do so. Early the following year the intrepid Kotzebue visited the group, and incidentally discussed with the leading missionaries the relations between Tahiti and England.

**Pomare seeks British Protection.**—In 1825 Queen Pomare petitioned England for protection, for already the

<sup>1</sup> *Tyerman and Bennet*, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ellis Researches*, vol. iii.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the Windward Division of the Tahitian Mission*, 1824.

first faint menaces of European invaders began to be felt. "We wish you to be our friend," she wrote, in a letter which the missionary Henry Nott handed personally to the Foreign Office, "and for you to protect us. Let not our land be molested by British subjects now or at any future time; and should we be invaded by any others do you then defend us. Should it be agreeable to you to grant this petition we then wish to use the English flag. If we hoist the British flag we are in fear, and if we hoist our own flag we are also in fear lest we should be invaded from some other country. Another petition also is that you will never abandon us but regard us with kindness for ever."

Fully occupied with European affairs and reluctant to add to his responsibilities elsewhere, Canning replied that while King George "feels every disposition to comply with your wish as far as he can do so with propriety, he regrets that consistently with the usages established among the nations of Europe it would be improper to grant the permission you solicit to use the British flag." His Majesty would, however, be glad to extend to the queen and her people "all such protection as His Majesty can grant to a friendly power at so remote a distance from his own kingdoms." King George congratulated the queen on the great moral and social advancement of her realm consequent on the introduction of Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

**The Incident of the Catholic Missionaries.**—In November 1836 the schooner *William Hamilton* arrived at Tahiti with two Catholic priests, Laval and Carret, and a carpenter of the same faith. They were the harbingers of the new Vicar-Apostolic of Oceania, and had been residing for some time in the Gambier Islands, with the object of mastering the Polynesian language, as the first step towards the spiritual conquest of the Pacific. According to a port regulation, passengers could not be landed without permission having first been obtained. In this case permission was not applied for, but a few days after landing the priests, with the American consul, waited in person on the queen and tendered the amount of the fine incurred. The money was refused and the offenders were informed they could not remain in the island. They were determined to remain until the arrival of a French man-of-war, but as there were signs of a disaffected party forming about them, they were placed on board a ship by Tahitian constables and compelled to depart.

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1843, lxi., Tahiti.

On the arrival of H.M.S. *Actæon* a few weeks later, the incident was reported to Captain Lord Edward Russell, who was understood to have approved the queen's action. Shortly afterwards Laval and another priest made a fresh attempt to land from an American vessel, applying for permission in the regular manner. But in view of what had previously happened permission was refused, and constables prevented the priests from landing.<sup>1</sup>

De Thierry, the French adventurer, visited Tahiti in July 1835, *en route* from Panama to New Zealand with his wife and family, a military retinue, arms and ammunition.<sup>2</sup>

**An Appeal to Palmerston.**—Foreseeing trouble from the rejection of the French missionaries, the English consul-missionary Pritchard wrote to Lord Palmerston (19th November 1836) a letter which throws a flood of light on the difficulties which were already confronting the little kingdom.

"Her Majesty is anxious to know," he asked, "whether the British or any other government can compel Her Majesty to receive any body of foreigners that may be disposed to settle in her dominions. Tahiti is acknowledged by the British Government as an independent nation, hence she hoists her own flag. If she be considered as an independent nation, has she any power to enact laws for her own government so long as those do not interfere with, nor are contrary to, the laws of nations? . . . At present there are several Frenchmen who are determined to land and reside on this island as Roman Catholic missionaries."<sup>3</sup>

This was the beginning of a long and fierce controversy which only ended with the annexation of Tahiti by France. That it was dictated, from the Tahitian point of view, by the missionary interest, is even more obvious from the diction of the letter from Queen Pomare V., which the consul enclosed. The Roman Catholics, as stated, had claimed to have the sanction of the British Government for entering Tahiti, and the queen asked: "Is it suitable that they should come here and disturb the peace of my government? It is by no means agreeable to us to receive these Roman Catholic missionaries. We have a sufficient quantity of teachers in our land. We agree well with them; they do not trouble us. We conceive these Roman Catholic missionaries have nothing to do with our island, and hence we are determined not to receive them."

<sup>1</sup> *Polynesian Reminiscences*, by W. T. Pritchard.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of Daniel Wheeler*, 1842.

<sup>3</sup> P.P. 1843, lxi., No. 473.

Lord Palmerston replied that so far from having sanctioned the invasion of the Roman Catholic missionaries, the British Government had no knowledge of them whatever. "Neither would the Government of this country have any right to give or to withhold their sanction to the residence of the subjects of any other nation in territories which do not appertain to Great Britain. Of course every government has a right to refuse any foreigners permission to reside within its dominions if the presence of such foreigners is considered hurtful to the state; but if no such reason exists for requiring foreigners to depart, it is contrary to the usual rules of international hospitality to force them to leave a country in which they may wish to take up their abode, provided they do not infringe the laws of the land."<sup>1</sup>

**Intervention of French Warships.**—While Palmerston was thus teaching ethics at a distance, events were moving fast in the South Seas. The opposition shown to Roman Catholics in more than one group had come to the notice of the royal government, and Louis Philippe saw in it an excellent means of gaining popularity with a section of his people. The visible hand of the English missionaries in the agitation gave an added zest to his action, for France had fully recovered her pride from the degradation imposed by the Holy Alliance, and was again a vigorous rival to her great maritime neighbour. Henceforth, under Louis's orders, the French naval commanders in the Pacific showed an aggressive zeal in defence of the Catholic missions. In Hawaii, in Tahiti, in New Zealand, wherever the field was already occupied by Protestants, incidents were precipitated which gave rise to a deal of uneasiness in missionary and political circles in England.

Bishop Pompallier, the first Vicar-Apostolic of Western Oceania, states that though the Catholic priests had been expelled from Tahiti in 1836 he did not hesitate on arriving there in September of the following year to wait upon the queen, and "all the royal family and the ministers, excepting the queen herself, came on board to visit me. They were well received and returned content." The bishop was given permission to walk ashore, and he celebrated Mass and held a christening. In entering upon his episcopate he decided not to settle missionaries on islands where Protestants were already established, owing to the obvious advantages possessed by those who knew the language and customs of

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1843, lxi., No. 473.



the islanders.<sup>1</sup> But in a few years, as we shall see, the claims of the Catholics to toleration even in wholly Protestant islands were enforced by the guns of the French Navy.

Dr Karl Scherzer, of the Austrian frigate *Novara*, candidly admits that Christianity had been established in Tahiti for thirty-nine years with excellent results before the first Roman Catholic appeared. The Association of Picpus was founded in Paris in 1814, and in 1833 one of its priests, Etienne Rouchouse, was appointed Vicar-Apostolic of Eastern Oceania, with the title of Bishop of Nelopolis in partibus. That same year five priests left for Valparaiso, hoping to forestall the Protestants in many of the islands, and finally "that all whom heresy has led astray and brought under its iron yoke may be freely brought under the mild and gentle yoke of the Catholic doctrine."<sup>2</sup>

**The Ultimatum of Dupetit Thouars.**—On 30th August 1838 the French frigate *Venus*, Commodore Dupetit Thouars, came to anchor at Tahiti, and on the following day a letter in the form of an ultimatum was addressed to Queen Pomare. According to the narrative of the consul, the frigate assumed a hostile appearance and the natives were much alarmed. The queen wrote begging for time to comply with the commodore's demands and to make an explanation. But it was made clear to Mr Pritchard, who acted as mediator, that "the only alternative to devastation and death was to comply with the demands."

The chiefs could not possibly assemble in time to come to a decision, and it was clear Dupetit Thouars intended to carry out his threat. Consequently Mr Pritchard (the missionary-consul) and two or three other Englishmen subscribed the amount demanded and paid it "into the hands of the cashier of the frigate on behalf of Queen Pomare." Meanwhile the corvettes *Astrolabe* and *Zeelee* had arrived and the *Heroïne* was expected, and under the influence of this great show of force the queen and her chiefs agreed to a treaty with the French.

What Dupetit Thouars actually demanded on behalf of the King of the French was an apology in French and Tahitian within twenty-four hours, an indemnity of 2000 Spanish dollars for "the bad and cruel treatment which some of his priests who had come to Otaheite had suffered,"

<sup>1</sup> *Early History of the Catholic Church in Oceania*, by Bishop Pompallier, 1888.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, No. xli., p. 31.

and a salute of twenty-one guns to the French flag at Motu-uta.

Tahiti having neither guns nor powder, the gallant commodore lent both to the British consul, and by this vicarious arrangement the French flag was duly saluted on 1st September.

On the 5th M. Moerenhout, who was a Belgian by birth and as United States consul had become rather obnoxious to the queen and her chiefs, was presented by M. Dupetit Thouars as consul for France. Pomare objected, but the appointment was persisted in and was finally accepted.

**The Franco-Tahitian Treaty of 1838.**—The next step was to demand of the queen the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and reciprocal freedom for nationals. Pomare objected that as her people were all Protestants she did not desire the Roman Catholic doctrines to be taught at all. To this Dupetit Thouars replied that as Frenchmen all priests must receive full protection under the Tahitian Government, but that at the same time it was "competent to Her Majesty to enact a law forbidding the teaching of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church in her dominions." In the event Dupetit Thouars concluded a formal treaty, to which the only objection that could be urged was that it was signed under duress.

"Il y aura paix perpetuelle et amitié entre les Francais et les habitans d'Otaïti. Les Francais, quelle que soit leur profession, pourront aller et venir librement, s'établir et commercer dans toutes les îles qui composent le gouvernement d'Otaïti: ils y seront reçus et protégés comme les étrangers les plus favorisés. Les sujets de la Reine d'Otaïti pourront également venir en France: ils y seront reçus et protégés comme les étrangers les plus favorisés. Fait et arrêté au Palais de la Reine d'Otaïti à Papeïti, le 4 Septembre 1838 (5 September style Otaïtien)."

These formalities having been carried through, Dupetit Thouars proffered sundry courtesies before sailing away, but the only gift the queen accepted personally was a barrel organ. For family reasons she could not dine aboard the frigate, and this invitation the English consul accepted in her stead.

A fair and impartial criticism of the whole dispute is contained in Commodore Wilkes's narrative:—

"It is difficult to say which was most in the wrong. The Protestant religion was established by law upon the island to the

exclusion of all others, and this the priests well knew ; nor can any but zealots excuse their intrusion upon a missionary ground already fully and successfully occupied. On the other hand their precipitate expulsion, under circumstances of great hardship, exhibited an unchristian spirit, for which the resident missionaries may justly be held responsible, as they unquestionably had it in their power to prevent any positive ill-treatment on the part of the natives."

As for the action of the French naval authorities, Wilkes did not hesitate to express his opinion freely. It was "high-handed and hardly admits of justification. The French commander appears in thus bullying a defenceless people into payment of an exorbitant indemnity and into a relinquishment of the right of admitting or excluding foreigners and strange religious creeds by municipal regulation in a light far from advantageous."<sup>1</sup>

**An Appeal to England.**—The perilous state of Tahitian independence being now apparent, the queen and her chiefs drew up a petition to Queen Victoria (8th November 1838) praying her to make good the veiled promises of protection previously received from the British Crown:—

"Accustomed from childhood," the petition stated, "to cherish the English name, we are following the impulse of our own hearts. Since the first Englishman neared our shores in one of your vessels we have praised you as the only nation which showed us a Christian heart. And now may you lend us a Christian hand. The blessings of your religion, which through your pious exertions you taught us to follow, opened to us two new entrances to two new worlds unknown heretofore to our people. With the assistance of Jesus Christ and the paternal care of the missionaries we may hope to secure one of these worlds ; but the other into which civilisation leads us now begins to embitter our lives, and will ultimately deprive us even of the dominion of the graves of our ancestors if we are left to our own resources."

The petition added that having passed laws to improve their condition, the Tahitians found themselves unable to carry them out and even threatened "in what we have dearest to our hearts—the Protestant faith and our nationality. Do not let these good seeds perish. Do not leave undone what you began and what is so happily progressing. Lend us your powerful hand. Take us under your protection. Let your flag cover us and your lion defend us. Determine the form through which we could shelter ourselves lawfully under

<sup>1</sup> *Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition*, by Commodore Charles Wilkes.

your wings. Cause our children to bless you and to cherish your Christian feelings as we do."<sup>1</sup>

On the same day the Tahitian Parliament passed a law on the lines suggested by Dupetit Thouars, declaring Protestantism to be the only lawful religion:—

"Let Tahiti and all the islands of the kingdom of Pomare Vahine the First stand unique in that gospel which the missionaries from Britain have propagated ever since the year 1797."

Any person coming to Tahiti to disturb that gospel or to teach any other was to be deported, and any native Tahitian propagating gospels inconsistent with the gospel of truth taught by the British missionaries was similarly liable to be banished from the realm.<sup>2</sup>

If regarded as a civilised and sovereign state, Tahiti was well within her rights in passing such a law, but it was so clearly *ad hoc* and inspired by the Protestant missionaries that France could scarcely ignore the challenge.

**Palmerston's Non-committal Answer.**—Nor does Pomare seem to have had a very eager champion in Great Britain. Palmerston in 1839 gave practically the same vague and airy answer that Canning gave twelve years earlier. He expressed his deep concern at the difficulties with which the queen found herself surrounded, but instructed the consul to inform her that

"considering the great extent of the present dominions of the British Crown in the Southern Ocean, and the difficulty of adequately providing for the defence of the persons living in allegiance to Her Majesty in a quarter of the globe so distant from Great Britain, Her Majesty feels that it would be impossible for her to fulfil with proper punctuality any defensive obligations which Her Majesty might contract towards the government and inhabitants of Tahiti. And therefore, however strong the interest may be which Her Majesty takes in the prosperity of the Society Islands and in the happiness and welfare of Queen Pomare, Her Majesty is bound in good faith to decline to enter into a specific engagement of the kind which has been suggested. But you will assure Queen Pomare that Her Majesty will at all times be ready to attend to any representations that Queen Pomare may wish to make, and will always be glad to give the protection of her good offices in any differences which may arise between Queen Pomare and any other power."

It must have been quite evident to the missionary

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1843, No. 473, proceedings of the French at Tahiti.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



advisers of the queen that England was a broken reed so far as Tahiti was concerned, and that a statesman who could write in such terms could not be expected to give much real assistance in the more difficult times to come. England had, in fact, abdicated the protection of the English missions in Tahiti.

**Anti-Catholic Law Repealed.**—No sooner had the anti-Catholic law come into force than Captain La Place, in the frigate *L'Artemise*, arrived at Tahiti in distress. He spent some weeks refitting and observing the course of affairs in the little kingdom, and as soon as his vessel was ready for sea again he anchored off the capital and demanded the repeal of the law. In vain Pomare and her advisers, still hoping for a favourable reply from England, pleaded that the law was passed at the suggestion of Dupetit Thouars. La Place would accept no excuses, and under the old threat of guns the law was repealed. The next demand, says Mr W. T. Pritchard, was for a piece of land at Papeete as a site for a Roman Catholic church. This was conceded. Then followed a requisition that in every town or village where there was a Protestant chapel there should be built gratuitously a Roman Catholic place of worship. This, too, was promised.

Finally, in June 1839, La Place presented a document in which the queen promised that no Frenchman should be molested in his religious duties, and that the free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion should be permitted in Tahiti and its dependencies.

Though the narrative from which the story of these negotiations is derived must be regarded as a partisan source,<sup>1</sup> it is quite clear from corroborative testimony that the Protestant missionaries, as the advisers of the queen, constituted a direct opposition to French interests in Tahiti, and it is equally clear that as soon as Palmerston's decision to withhold active protection became known the French demands must be conceded and must lead to further encroachments.

Having obtained full tolerance, the Roman Catholics established themselves firmly in the group, and the prestige which they gained from the intervention of the French warships greatly increased their influence. Their progress was jealously resisted and the inevitable climax came in 1842.

**A New Ultimatum.**—Early in the year Admiral Buglet,

<sup>1</sup> *Polynesian Reminiscences*, by W. T. Pritchard, son of G. Pritchard, and afterwards himself consul at Fiji.

commanding-in-chief the French naval forces in the Pacific, wrote to the queen from Valparaiso assuring her that France had no designs on her independence. In August Captain Du Bouze, of the frigate *L'Aube*, wrote to the same effect. But a month later Dupetit Thouars again put in an appearance in the *La Reine Blanche*. Pritchard was in England on leave and the queen was in the Leeward Islands of the group.

After consultation with the French consul Dupetit Thouars complained to the regent that the flag of the French priests had been insulted, and that there was not a single Frenchman in the kingdom who had not some complaint to make of the iniquities and overbearing conduct of the Government. Contrary to law, their domiciles had been entered, and they had been beaten, thrown into prison and executed as villains, without being able to obtain a hearing. And all this in spite of the most-favoured nation treatment guaranteed by the treaty. "Ill-advised, submitting to all things fatal to her true interests, the queen will learn a second time that the faith and loyalty of a power such as France is not with immunity to be trifled with."

Dupetit Thouars refused any longer to receive the missionaries as interpreters or intermediaries, and there was a long conference on board the frigate with the regent himself. It extended well into the night, and when day dawned it was announced that the chiefs had signed a document asking the King of the French for his protection for Tahiti. Dupetit Thouars had demanded a new indemnity of 10,000 dollars as security for good behaviour, and threatened that in default of receiving it he would occupy with French troops the queen's forts and the establishments on Motu-uta.

**Request for French Protection.**—No succour being forthcoming from outside, the queen and the high chiefs, recognising their inability to govern so as to preserve a good understanding with foreign governments without the risk of losing their islands, their authority and their liberty, petitioned the French commander (9th September 1842) to solicit French protection on the following conditions:—

1. The sovereignty of the queen and the authority of the queen and high chiefs over their people to be guaranteed.
2. All laws and regulations to be issued in the queen's name and signed by her.
3. The possession of lands belonging to the queen and to the people to be secured to them, and all disputes as to ownership of land or property to be decided by the tribunals of the country.

4. Everyone to be free in the exercise of his form of worship or religion.

5. The churches at present established to continue to exist, and the English missionaries to continue their labours without molestation. The same to apply to every other form of religion, and nobody to be molested or constrained in his belief.

On these conditions the queen and the chiefs were prepared to resign to the King of the French "all foreign policy," and Dupetit Thouars accepted the offer subject to the king's approval. He remarked that "a decision so honourable to his government removed every symptom of dissatisfaction to which the harsh measures towards his countrymen had given rise," and gave hopeful promise of a strengthening of the bonds of unity and friendship between Tahiti and France.

**French Protection and Provisional Government.**—A protectorate government was set up consisting of three members nominated by the admiral, viz., a commissioner royal (who was the French consul); a military governor; and the captain of the port of Papeete. The two last named were lieutenants of the *La Reine Blanche*. The function of the provisional government was stated to be to regulate all the affairs of foreigners.

The acting British consul (Mr Charles B. Wilson) reported to the Foreign Office that the Tahitian flag had been changed, that it was now the original flag with the French colours in the upper part next to the staff, and that it had been saluted on the *La Reine Blanche* on 26th September. Parts of Tahiti, he said, remained "free," and parts were subject to the same regulations as before pending the pleasure of the King of the French being known.

**Another Bid for Independence.**—The position was now an extremely delicate one for the British naval commanders. Unable to recognise the new régime, pending instructions from the admiral, they continued to pay the customary royal courtesies to the queen. In January 1843 when H.M.S. *Talbot* (Captain Sir Thomas Thompson) arrived, the queen rowed across to the vessel in the state barge flying the old Tahitian flag (red, white and red bars lengthwise). The *Talbot* hoisted the same standard and fired a royal salute.

The provisional government was furious, and passed a resolution protesting against the British captain's "want of regard for the treaty made with a foreign nation," and against his entering into relations with a queen who had ceded to the

French "all her rights relative to the exterior relations of her estates."

Sir Thomas Thompson made full inquiry into the circumstances under which the protectorate had been set up, and remained in Tahiti in a watching capacity until the end of February. He was relieved by the *Vindictive*, which by a strange irony chanced to be bringing to Pomare gifts of royal favour from Queen Victoria and from the Governor of New South Wales—a carriage and a set of drawing-room furniture. In the flush of this incident the prestige of the unhappy queen was momentarily restored. The Tahitian flag flew once more over the royal residence and was saluted with full honours, and the queen, on the suggestion of Commodore Toup Nicolas, ordered a crown to be put in the white part of her flag as a symbol of royalty. The provisional government immediately demanded its removal as insulting to France, but the *Vindictive* was protecting the queen for the time being, and the demand failed.

Despite the presence of a French frigate the Tahitian code was again put into force, the legislative assembly convened, and various local improvements were made. Incidentally the white residents of Papeete appealed to the British warship to protect the provisional government against a threatened rising of the natives. The *Vindictive* stayed for about six months. For six months, under her guns, the old glories of Tahiti flourished again. But during those six months the fate of Tahiti was being decided irrevocably between Whitehall and the Quai d'Orsay. With the departure of the *Vindictive* disappeared the last semblance of Tahitian independence.

On 5th November Dupetit Thouars returned with the announcement that Louis Philippe had accepted the proffered protectorate, and three days later Captain Bruat was installed as commissioner to Queen Pomare and the great chiefs. France was triumphant. The Protestant missionaries could not now reasonably hope for British intervention on their behalf, and they signed a memorial expressing their loyal acceptance of the position.

**Negotiations in Europe.**—It requires a digression to trace the negotiations in Europe which led up to this change. In March 1843 Lord Cowley, the British Minister in Paris, in a conversation with M. Guizot, was informed that the suzerainty of Tahiti had been offered to France and provisionally accepted by Admiral Dupetit Thouars. M. Guizot added :—



“‘We have nothing to conceal with respect to our proceedings in the Pacific. We should gladly avail ourselves of any means of strengthening or improving our possession of the Marquesas, but beyond this we have no views of conquest or appropriation of any kind. With respect to the Sandwich Islands, for instance, we are quite ready to acknowledge their independence.’ This he repeated several times. He afterwards observed that there were some grounds for apprehending that the tranquillity of the islands in the Pacific might be disturbed by dissensions on account of the differences of the religious tenets of the Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries. He did not, however, say that any disturbance had yet taken place” (Lord Cowley to Lord Aberdeen, 20th March 1843).

A few days after this despatch Guizot said in the Chamber of Peers that “no impediment would be thrown in the way of the dissemination of the Christian religion, and that equal protection would be given to Protestant and to Catholic missionaries.” Lord Aberdeen cordially acknowledged this assurance, as seeming, in conjunction with the article of the convention, to guarantee “that none of those estimable teachers of Christianity will be disturbed in the free exercise of their religious functions” (Lord Aberdeen to Lord Cowley, 28th March 1843).<sup>1</sup> A day or two later Cowley was informed that special instructions had been sent to the French naval authorities in the Pacific to protect the Protestant missionaries.

The missionary interest was dominant in British colonial policy in those days, and there was genuine and widespread alarm for the welfare of the Protestant missionaries, now at the mercy of a Catholic power. To appease it Aberdeen again pressed for specific assurances, and Guizot on 7th April handed Cowley the following note:—

“I appreciate as I ought the interest which leads you to ask me in a spirit of amicable confidence and conciliation, to affirm all these assurances, and I have no hesitation in repeating to you that the government of the king, in the system which it proposes to apply to the Marquesas and Society Islands, will remain faithful to three great principles which it has never departed from—the liberty of religious worship; protection to the subjects of a friendly power; and finally, the no less sacred duty of assisting in the labours taken to spread the benefits of Christianity.”

**French Naval Designs.**—These assurances were as much as could be demanded with propriety, and they were put

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1844, li., No. 529.

forward by Aberdeen as amply sufficient to calm the fears of the Protestants. The British Government was, in fact, troubled by quite another aspect of the acquisition, namely, the statement made by the French Minister of Marine in asking for an extraordinary credit of 5,987,000 francs for the naval establishments in the Pacific. In presenting the vote he said :—

“Là France n'avait dans l'océan Pacifique aucun établissement où ses batiments de guerre et ses navires de commerce puissent trouver un asile toujours ouvert et une protection moins mobile que celle d'une station navale. Cependant là ou des interets Francais commencent à se developper il importe de créer un centre autour duquel ils puissent se groupper et prosperer à l'abri du pavillon national.”<sup>1</sup>

Not only was Polynesia a promising field for commercial expansion and the furtherance of civilisation, but the minister emphasised the advantages which would accrue from these new settlements “if a plan which now fixes the attention of all maritime powers should be carried into execution.” When the Panama Canal was completed the Marquesas and Society Islands would be most important resorts for the shipping of all nations, and an entrepôt for the trade of Peru, Chili, and Mexico. The acquisition of the fertile Tahiti would render self-supporting the previously annexed Marquesas, and as the occupation, according to the minister, “rested mainly upon military force,” he asked for a garrison of 1200 men for these two groups. It was proposed, he said, to restrict the trade in arms and ammunition in the South Seas.

Guizot, who knew well the powerful influences pressing Peel, says in his *Memoirs of Sir Robert Peel* that from the beginning France had no other object in her acquisitions :—

“We wished to acquire in the Pacific Ocean,” he says, “a point which would serve at once as a healthy and safe penal settlement and a station to which our mercantile navy might resort for supplies or for refuge.”

Dupetit Thouars had been told to take possession of the Marquesas, but there was no intention at all as regards Tahiti. When the Government was informed some months later that he had been led to establish a protectorate there, it realised “not without regret that some difficulties might result from this proceeding in regard to our relations with England ;

<sup>1</sup> *Moniteur Universel*, 25th April 1843.

but we ratified the act unhesitatingly." The only impelling reason Guizot could recall was that the French flag had just been hoisted in the Pacific, and "we could not consent that at the very moment of its appearance it should be withdrawn."

In the Chamber of Deputies Guizot said more than once that it would be "an insensate enterprise" for a government to undertake to carry on a religious propagandism and to impose a religion by force even on pagans. He adds:—

"The English missionaries in Tahiti were real moral magistrates, possessed of great power over both the population and chiefs: revered preachers and reformers, enjoying at once the success of their teaching and the pleasures of domination. The establishment of the French protectorate was naturally unpleasant to them; it involved a danger to their faith, the downfall of their preponderance, and a check on the reputation of their country in the Pacific Ocean."<sup>1</sup>

**British Renunciation in Tahiti.**—Though Aberdeen had evidently decided not to oppose the French occupation, it was some months before he could face the public with a definite announcement of abdication. We find him in July informing the Admiralty that "while H.M. Government have not acknowledged the right of France to assume and exercise a protectorship, they have nevertheless done nothing to call that right in question." The cession he considered was brought about partly by intrigue and partly by intimidation; nevertheless it was made "voluntarily and completed in due form." Therefore, however much the British Government regretted to see Tahiti subjected to a foreign power, there did not seem to be sufficient ground on the score of illegality to dispute the cession. Consequently the Foreign Office advised that British naval commanders should make no difficulty about saluting the flag which the French admiral had introduced, and should not enter into any disputes as to the right of the French to exercise authority in conjunction with Queen Pomare.

Taking the hint, perhaps, from the ubiquitous activity of the French corvettes, Aberdeen said he considered it indispensable "in the present state of affairs that more frequent visits than heretofore should be made by H.M. ships of war to the Society Islands, in order to keep alive in the minds of the rulers and natives the feeling of respect which they have always been well disposed to pay to the

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Sir Robert Peel*, by M. Guizot, 1847.

British flag, and to support by constant personal communication the influence which the British name and character have acquired for themselves in that part of the world" (Mr Addington to Sir John Barrow, 11th July 1843).<sup>1</sup>

It was not till the end of August that Cowley was instructed to inform the French Government that Britain would offer no opposition to the French protectorate. Nevertheless, Aberdeen wrote (25th August 1843), the British Government considered themselves "fully authorised by the ancient and friendly connection which has subsisted between Great Britain and the Society Islands since the very first discovery by a British navigator, by the promise of good offices made to these people on different occasions by the British Government, and by the fact of the islands having been converted and civilised by British missionaries, to intercede with the French Government for the purpose of securing to the unfortunate queen of those islands all the liberty compatible with the restrictions she has imposed upon herself, and especially to obtain for her protection from the harsh treatment to which she has been subjected" (Lord Aberdeen to Lord Cowley).<sup>1</sup> He further insisted that in spite of the misconduct of one of their number, the body of Protestant missionaries who had signed an address of loyalty to the new régime, should receive due protection. "H.M. Government consider themselves bound by every consideration of national honour and justice to support the British missionaries in the Society Islands, and they cannot allow that the recent change which has taken place in any way alters or weakens that obligation."<sup>1</sup>

**The Missionary-Consul Rebuked.**—It was an unpleasant duty for the British Government, having disappointed those who had so honourably pioneered and civilised this savage group, to have to curb the patriotism of the missionaries, and adjure them to hope no more but to conform to the French rule. Pritchard had been much more optimistic than the previous history of the *affaire* Tahiti justified, and in March he had informed the Foreign Office that he was endeavouring, with Commodore Toup Nicolas, to "act in accordance with the repeated promises of assistance and protection made by the British Government to Queen Pomare." His first hint that things were not as he believed was conveyed in a letter dated 14th June, covering a copy of the instructions to British naval commanders, and urging him to "adapt his conduct and language in exact conformity

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1844, li., No. 529, proceedings of the French at Tahiti.



with the tenor and spirit of the policy therein expressed." A month later he was instructed to "watch closely the proceedings of the French authorities with regard to the Protestant missionaries and to the liberty of religious worship."

In September Aberdeen had to administer a severe rebuke to the consul's enthusiasm. It was quite obvious from the despatches of Canning and Palmerston, he wrote (25th September 1843), that the British Government was not prepared to interpose actively though

"they willingly proffered such protection and good offices as without improper interference they could afford. But it is not to be supposed that at the very moment that they were declining to take the islands under the protection of the British Crown, Her Majesty's Government could have intended to engage themselves to interpose their good offices on behalf of the sovereign in such a manner as to incur the almost certainty of collision with a foreign power."

He repeated that there were no grounds for opposing the assumption of authority by the French, but that they would "firmly maintain the right of the British Protestant missionaries to enjoy entire and unrestricted freedom in the exercise of their religious functions, including the full power of upholding in the pulpit the truth of the Protestant doctrines against any persons who may impugn them." As to the future, Pritchard was warned to observe the utmost caution and courtesy in his demeanour towards the French authorities, "and to abstain from every act or word which might be construed into an intention to give offence. Above all things you will be careful to use no expression in your intercourse with the queen or her chiefs which could encourage them to expect at any time active assistance from H.M. Government against the French."

**French Annexation.**—But before this letter could have reached its destination the state of affairs had completely changed, and Pritchard had delivered himself into the hands of the authorities. Only a few days after announcing the acceptance of the protectorate by Louis Philippe, Dupetit Thouars demanded an audience of the queen. This was granted, with the suggestion that it should take place in the British consulate.

It was hardly to be expected that Dupetit Thouars would accept such a condition. Nor did he. Instead, he informed Pritchard officially that "in consequence of actions

alike hostile and offensive to the dignity of the King of France, he found himself under the necessity no longer to recognise Queen Pomare as the sovereign of the lands and people of the Society Islands, and that to-morrow, in the name of the King and of France he would take official possession of the islands."<sup>1</sup>

On 7th November, accordingly, he ordered the queen's personal standard to be struck under threat of armed force. Still reluctant to acknowledge the loss of her authority, Pomare appealed to her people to rely "on the justice and the clemency of the King of the French and the other sovereigns of Europe."

At midday a strong force was landed from the frigate, a square was formed about the queen's flagstaff, the flag was lowered, and Dupetit Thouars took formal possession. "And covered with smoke," says Pritchard, "the gallant officer who stepped forward and put his foot on the crown in Pomare's flag, exclaimed in broken English: 'Here goes the crown of England once more in the dirt!' and three cheers more echoed the exclamation."

The keys of the queen's house were taken, and the queen herself repaired to H.M.S. *Dublin* for protection. The British commander formally protested against the proceedings, and Pritchard addressed a letter to the French admiral (7th November 1843), informing him that his appointment was as consul to the French protectorate, and that his function as consul must now cease. "I have accordingly struck my flag, not having been accredited by the British Government as consul to a French colony." The rest of the letter was a warm protest against "the taking of the dominions of an independent sovereign who for nearly half a century has enjoyed the friendly protection of Great Britain." On the following day M. Bruat took up his quarters in the queen's house and assumed office as governor of the French possessions in Oceania.

Two months later H.M.S. *Dublin* arrived again at Papeete instructed by the admiral to acknowledge the French protectorate. As the protectorate was no longer in existence, Captain Tucker wrote to the governor saying that while he would hasten to salute the French protectorate "were it now in existence, he must decline saluting the French flag on Tahiti until further instructed."

The propriety of the reservation Bruat acknowledged with acid politeness, remarking that until he was instructed

<sup>1</sup> *Polynesian Reminiscences*, by W. T. Pritchard.

from France he could not accept the proposed temporary reappointment as consul of Pritchard "dont la conduite a été par trop hostile au gouvernement Français." The captain was not aware that the consul's conduct had been objectionable, and persisted in the nomination, which the governor firmly declined to accept (12th January 1844), remarking: "Son opposition au gouvernement du protectorat est assez connue qu'il soit inutile de motiver davantage mon refus, fonde principalement."

**Arrest of Mr Pritchard.**—Shortly after this the Protestant missionaries approached Bruat on behalf of the outlawed natives who had declined to acknowledge the French authority and were assembled in hostile array under Paofai, on the east side of the island. Bruat received them in a conciliatory spirit, but insisted that the first step towards a pardon must be a frank submission by the missionaries themselves as the spiritual leaders of the people. Thereafter he promised that such chiefs as came into Papeete would not be imprisoned or exiled.

But the chiefs were not disposed to submit, and the French were seriously threatened by the concentration in the mountains. For this Bruat plainly held the missionaries—and particularly Pritchard—to be responsible. H.M.S. *Basilisk* had relieved the *Dublin*, and Bruat, feeling that the continued presence of British warships in Tahitian waters encouraged the disaffection of the natives, declared martial law as a measure of security.

In February H.M.S. *Cormorant* relieved the *Basilisk*. Bruat was absent from Papeete on a tour of duty, and in his absence the captain of the corvette *Meurthe* impulsively ordered the arrest of Pritchard as he was about to go on board the *Cormorant*. He was thrown into a blockhouse with some indignity. Captain Gordon, of the *Cormorant*, demanded the immediate release of the missionary, and this was complied with as soon as Bruat returned to Papeete. The governor requested, however, that the *Cormorant*, having no further business in Tahiti, would take her departure and would give Pritchard a passage from the islands. The request was acceded to, and a few weeks later Pritchard joined H.M.S. *Vindictive* at Valparaiso and went in her to England.<sup>1</sup>

**Excitement in England.**—The narrative of the missionary-consul when he reached England threw the country into a ferment of excitement, and relations with France instantly became strained. Peel at first took the

<sup>1</sup> See appendices to Guizot's *Memoirs of Peel*.

same view as the public accepted, namely, that an insult had been offered to the person of a British consul: and he demanded satisfaction accordingly. The missionary interest was furious at the overthrow of Protestantism in a field so honourably developed by British missionaries. There were six principal societies, and their revenue in 1846 amounted to £533,000, an emphatic evidence of the strength of the movement. In Parliament it had a score of champions who would not allow the matter to rest, and it was only the mutual goodwill of Peel and Guizot which enabled the difficulty to be weathered without a serious rupture.

Guizot contended that after his letter to Dupetit Thouars of 7th November the French authorities could no longer consider Pritchard as a consul. He was, in fact, merely a foreign resident and an English missionary. The protectorate officials had power to deport persons who were guilty of opposing or endeavouring to subvert the existing régime; and Guizot claimed that by his acts and speeches and by his advice to Queen Pomare Pritchard had been actively and incessantly hostile to the French authority. At the same time he freely admitted that his detention was illegal and the manner of it deserving of blame. For this he was ready to apologise and pay due compensation.

Thenceforward the matter yielded readily to compromise, and the French Government softened the feeling of irritation in England by withholding its approval from Dupetit Thouars's act of annexation.<sup>1</sup> And so the *affaire* Pritchard was composed between the two countries.

In a despatch to Admiral de Mackau, Bruat acknowledged that he could not approve the manner in which Pritchard had been treated in his absence, though he considered his arrest a necessary measure. He was immediately on Bruat's orders removed to the corvette *Meurthe*, where he was received as a guest at the commander's table. And he was deported on Bruat's initiative, "considérant que M. Pritchard n'était pas plus qu'un simple résident Anglais, dont l'influence sur l'ex-reine Pomaré et le parti révolté était devenue dangereuse pour la tranquillité de l'île."

**The Declaration of 1847.**—The French dominion did not for another half century attain the definitive character to which Dupetit Thouars's act had aspired. In 1847 the British Government made representations in favour of the natives who were still in revolt against the French régime, and as a result those who wished to leave the islands were permitted

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1845, lii., No. 603.



to do so, taking their movable property with them. On 19th June 1847 a declaration was signed at London with the object of removing a cause of discussion between the two governments. Under this they both acknowledged the independence of the Leeward Islands of Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora, with the smaller islands adjacent. They engaged reciprocally never to take possession of any of them either absolutely or by way of a protectorate or in any other form, and never to recognise that a chief reigning in Tahiti could also reign in any of the other islands, and *vice versa*; thus establishing what was termed the "reciprocal independence" of the islands in question.<sup>1</sup>

On assuming the protectorate of Tahiti the French applied their navigation laws discriminately against Great Britain in common with other powers. In 1856 it was pointed out by the consul that ocean-going ships could only anchor at the ports of Papeete, Tamoa, and Papatoai, while the coastal trade was reserved exclusively for vessels carrying the French or the protectorate flag. In practice the coastal trade was chiefly in the hands of British residents at Tahiti who registered their vessels there and flew the Tahitian flag. Owing to the scarcity and dearness of supplies, the visits of whalers to the group had fallen off very greatly.<sup>2</sup>

**The Raiatea Question.**—The position of Raiatea under the Declaration of 1847 remained for forty years a constant cause of soreness to France. England steadfastly declined throughout that time to waive her rights and permit France to bring the island within her dominions. In 1858 the United States consul took steps on his own responsibility to annex it, but the prior rights of France were an effective bar and the act was disavowed. Twenty years later Germany essayed the conclusion of a treaty of commerce similar to those she had just made with Samoa and Tonga; but again France objected, on the ground that one article of the treaty tended to restrict the sovereignty in Germany's favour.

In 1877, after reigning nominally for fifty years, Queen Pomare of Tahiti died. By consent of her successor the protectorate over that island was converted into a possession by annexation in June 1880. At the same time the French commissioner at Raiatea, in response to a request from the chiefs, declared a provisional protectorate over that island. Britain at once protested under the Declaration, while on the

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1847, lxx., No. 841. Hertslet's *Treaties*, vol. viii., pp. 998-9. See treaties and conventions, p. 315.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1857-8, lv., report of consul for the Georgian Islands.

spot the captain of H.M.S. *Turquoise* ordered a French lieutenant to lower the flag. In its place the Raiatean flag was hoisted and accorded a royal salute.

Negotiations followed. The French Government at once disavowed the act of the commissioner, but asked that the Declaration be abrogated. No basis of compensation could be agreed on at the moment, and the French flag was permitted to be rehoisted provisionally on 25th May 1881, for periods of six months, the discussion being renewed from time to time. In the event the provisional arrangement continued until 1887, when the matter was provided for in the Anglo-French Convention. The abrogation of the Declaration was finally signed in May 1888, leaving France free to extend her sovereignty over the whole group.<sup>1</sup>

**The Outlying Islands.**—In November 1853, the year in which the French flag was raised in New Caledonia, H.M.S. *Dido* found the French in possession of Gambier Islands, a small group in the same archipelago as Tahiti. There were a few French families living ashore, and some Roman Catholic priests "holding the king and natives in the most perfect subjection, both temporal and spiritual." The captain was not at the time aware that the French claimed a protectorate.<sup>2</sup> The Gambiers, where the Roman Catholic Vicar-Apostolic first established his nucleus and seminary for the Oceanic mission, are unimportant outliers of the archipelago towards the south-east.

The importance of Tahiti has become apparent since the opening of the Panama Canal, justifying the forecasts of French ministers at the time and the steps taken by the Australian colonies to secure ports of call in the eastern Pacific. Papeete is the nearest good harbour in Polynesia to Panama, and lies on the route of the Australian and New Zealand steamers. As long ago as 1846, when the canal project was first seriously mooted, the Legislative Council of New South Wales asked Captain Phillip King, R.N., for a report on the sea routes to Panama. He furnished a detailed criticism of the route by Tahiti and the Galapagos Islands, but felt that the lack of a wharf at the latter place and the necessity for special freighting of coal to either constituted a difficulty almost insurmountable.<sup>3</sup>

Twelve years later the necessity for a midway port of call

<sup>1</sup> Hansard Debates, House of Commons, 16th March 1885: M. de Lanessan's *L'expansion Coloniale de la France*.

<sup>2</sup> *Pitcairn*, by the Rev. T. B. Murray, pp. 181-3.

<sup>3</sup> P.P. 1846, xxxv.

in the Pacific was one of the principal reasons urged in favour of the annexation of Fiji. Colonel Smythe dismissed it as far as Fiji itself was concerned, and he suggested the acquisition of Oparo, or Rapa, at the southerly extremity of the Tahiti archipelago: lat. 29 deg. 38 min. S., long. 144 deg. 15 min. W. Possessing a good harbour and anchorage and few inhabitants, it seemed to him most suitable, and the Admiralty agreed to obtain a survey and report as early as possible (Colonial Office to Admiralty, 9th December 1861).<sup>1</sup> The excellent situation of Rapa, midway between Australia and Panama, was equally evident to the prescient French navigators, and the British intention was forestalled by them, a piece of good fortune over which M. de Lanessan audibly chuckles. It would be a perfect Gibraltar, he says, both as a shelter and as a victualling depot, and "would bar the route of all traders crossing Oceania." In her possession of Tahiti and Rapa France is undoubtedly very strongly equipped for the improbable event of a war actually fought in the Pacific.

The clash of interests between France and Britain in the eastern Pacific has gradually died away since the abrogation of the Declaration. In modern times British ships and British traders have shared generously in the trade of the possession, which in 1908 was valued at £279,000. Of this nearly half was done with the United States, only 12½ per cent. with France, and 12 per cent. with Great Britain.<sup>2</sup>

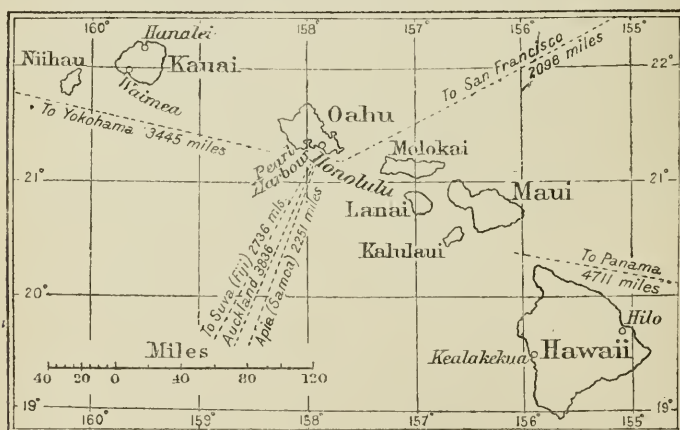
<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1862, xxxvi., No. 2995.

<sup>2</sup> Cd. 3727.

## CHAPTER III

### HAWAII

**Island Kingdom to Territory.**—Hawaii is a most instructive study in connection with the problem of the future of the Polynesian race, for it was here, far from intercourse with or interference by other branches of the race, that a native kingdom illustrated in the most favourable light the capacity



of the race for civilisation and self-government. The experiment covered almost a century. It closed definitely with the annexation of the islands by the United States in 1898, though it had practically failed a decade or two earlier than that.

The Hawaii or Sandwich Islands have their centre about 21 deg. N., 156 deg. W. They occupy roughly a half-way position between the Pacific coast of North America and the Fiji system to the south-west or the Marshall system to the W.S.W. As a port of call on the sea route to the Philippines Hawaii is a link between America and Asia.



**Discovery and Cession to England.**—It seems that the first Europeans to visit Hawaii were the Spanish navigators under Juan Gaetano in 1555. Quiros probably landed there about 1606. Cook visited the islands first in 1778 and La Perouse in 1786. The unhappy fate of the English navigator left a bad impression in England, so that until quite recently Hawaii was generally known in this country as *par excellence* "the cannibal islands." This impression was, however, to a large extent corrected by the intercourse of Vancouver, who in 1792-4 found Kamehameha such an interesting and progressive personality that he interceded with King George to send him some tokens of friendship. On Vancouver's last visit, in February 1794, a grand council of chiefs decided to place Hawaii under British protection, and Lieutenant Puget hoisted the flag and took possession on 25th February. The cession was never ratified by the British Government; but the good offices of Vancouver bore fruit thirty years later. In 1822 King George IV. presented a schooner to Kamehameha II. in token of the *rapprochement* between their fathers.

**Intercourse with Russia.**—Early in the nineteenth century the closest European connection with Hawaii was with Russia. The discovery ship *Neva*, under Captain Lisiansky, arrived in 1804, and ten years later a long-lived association commenced with the wreck at Waimea, on the island of Kauai, of a vessel belonging to M. Baranoff, the governor of the North American station of Sitka. In the following year Baranoff sent his doctor (Scheffer) to claim the salvage, and later another ship from Sitka brought a party of Indians to Waimea, where they formed a Russian settlement. A blockhouse was erected under Scheffer's orders, and the island was badly ravaged in the succeeding years in the efforts of the Russian commander to subdue it to the trading purposes of the Russian posts on the American mainland.

Scheffer's activities were purely personal, but it only became clear that Russia gave no official support when Kotzebue arrived in the corvette *Rurik* in 1816. She was the first foreign state vessel to enter the port of Honolulu. Kotzebue set up flags ashore for the purpose of surveying the harbour, and at first the Hawaiians, with the experience of Scheffer fresh in their minds, were thoroughly suspicious of his intentions.

A year or two earlier Hawaii had adopted a national flag of her own. The alternate jealousies of British and American

whalers, who were now visiting the group in considerable strength, were pandered to in the design, which consisted of "the English union and seven alternated red, white, and blue stripes, emblematic of the principal islands."<sup>1</sup> The national flag of Hawaii was first seen in a foreign port at Canton. In 1821 two more Russian ships of war were in Honolulu, and on this occasion they exchanged salutes with the Hawaiian flagship, the *Pride of Hawaii*.

Wheeler says that early in the thirties some of the chiefs agreed to place themselves under the protection of Russia, and ceded half the island, on which a Russian fort was erected. But the Czar disclaimed the act. The fort remained, and in 1835 Wheeler found it, with guns of several makes, including British, still in the embrasures.<sup>2</sup>

Kamehameha I., who conquered and consolidated the kingdom, died in 1819.

**How Christianity came from America.**—Kamehameha's successor Rihoriho, who came to the throne as Kamehameha II., overthrew the old idolatry of Hawaii. At the time there were at various universities in the United States Hawaiian youths who had been taken thither in whaling and trading ships, and when the conversion became known the American Board of Missions forthwith decided to increase its efforts in that promising field. At the moment of the overthrow of the idols it had a party of missionaries on the water bound round the Horn for Hawaii.

The Prime Minister (Kalaimoku) had been baptised in the Roman Catholic faith by a priest from the French corvette *L'Uranie* in 1819, but the American missionaries, who landed in 1820, were the first Christian teachers to settle in Hawaii. They were received with great sympathy by Kamehameha II., and after a delay of a fortnight to consider their case, they were permitted to establish themselves and commence their mission. This friendly reception was in fact the result of the great benefits the first Kamehameha had received from having in his service two seamen, John Young (an Englishman) and Isaac Davis (an American), the survivors of an American fur trader which was captured by the Hawaiians in 1790.

When the deputation from the London Missionary Society reached Hawaii in 1822, they found the American missionaries so well established and so successful that they dismissed all thought of themselves entering the Hawaiian

<sup>1</sup> *History of Hawaii*, by J. J. Jarves, 1843.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of Daniel Wheeler*.

field. Nevertheless, England was in high favour with the islanders. "The English Government," says Jarves, "uniformly manifested a courtesy towards the islanders that was highly honourable. Without asserting a claim to the island they recognised their nationality by numerous acts of courtesy and encouragement towards civilisation."

One of these acts occurred at the moment of the visit, for the deputation arrived with Captain Kent when he brought to Honolulu from Port Jackson the schooner presented by King George IV. to Kamehameha II. The king was delighted and desired forthwith to place his kingdom under the protection of England.

**A New Offer of Cession.**—When Captain Kent proposed to haul down the English colours under which the schooner had crossed the Pacific, the king protested. "No, no," he exclaimed, "I shall always hoist the English flag."

"I assure your Majesty," he wrote to King George (21st August 1822), "it is my sincere wish to be as worthy your attention as my father had the happiness to be. The whole of these islands having been conquered by my father, I have succeeded to the government of them, and beg leave to place them all under the protection of your most excellent Majesty, wishing to observe peace with all nations, and to be thought worthy the confidence I place in your Majesty's wisdom and judgment. The former idolatrous system has been abolished in these islands, as we wish the Protestant religion of your Majesty's dominions to be practised here."

At this time, 1822, the United States already had a consul resident at Honolulu, and a sufficient number of nationals to hold an annual reunion on Independence Day. In 1826 Captain Jones, of the United States Navy, concluded a treaty of peace and reciprocal treatment.

The king and queen and their suite left for England by the merchant ship *L'Aigle*, and landed at Portsmouth in May 1824. After only a few weeks of sightseeing and gaiety, the whole party were stricken by measles and the king and queen died, without having achieved their prime object of seeing King George IV. His Majesty, however, saw the survivors, and promised Hawaii his protection should any other power threaten its independence. He also ordered that the remains of the dead sovereigns should be embalmed and taken back to the Pacific in H.M.S. *Blonde*, commanded by Lord Byron.

During the boyhood of the new king the regency had great difficulties with the rowdy whites and ship captains

who frequented the ports. The laws for the regulation of shipping and the suppression of vice were strenuously resisted, and for some years the recalcitrant classes made war on the missionaries, whom they regarded as the cause of the restrictions. The native government passed through an anxious time.

Early in 1825 England took a further step in developing intercourse by the appointment of Richard Charlton as consul for Hawaii and the Society Islands. His wife and sister were the first European ladies to reside in the group. The selection was, however, an unhappy one.

**Expelling the Catholic Missionaries.**—It was not long before the new consul appeared before the natives in the unenviable rôle of a political partisan, and British prestige suffered very gravely as a consequence. In July 1826 John Alexius Bachelot was appointed by Pope Leo XII. Apostolic Prefect of the Sandwich Islands, and he reached his destination early in the following year, accompanied by a small group of priests and mechanics.

This incursion of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary marked the beginning of a semi-political contest in which the British consul was throughout the champion of the Catholics against the Protestant missionaries. By their rules the American missions were debarred from taking any part in political affairs; and this prohibition they reaffirmed themselves in a series of resolutions passed in 1838. They then decided that the Hawaiian nation should be built up apart from all foreign entanglements, and that the duty of the missionaries was merely to "teach the doctrine that rulers should be just, ruling in the fear of God, and seeking the best good of the nation."<sup>1</sup>

Their influence with the chiefs whom they had civilised was paramount, and it is scarcely necessary to remark that it was exerted, like that of the English Protestants at Tahiti, in opposition to the admission of the rival sect. For some few years the priests were allowed to carry on without interference, but in 1831 they were banished to California.

In 1829 the chiefs enacted a new criminal code, which was vigorously opposed by the foreign element, but opportunely the United States sloop *Vincennes* arrived specially charged by the President to encourage and support the local government. A few years later the chiefs asked for the loan of a legal adviser to assist in drawing up a code of laws, but the

<sup>1</sup> *History of Hawaii*, by J. J. Jarves.



republic was not sufficiently interested to comply with the request.

**Return of the Catholic Priests.**—Hawaii was genuinely anxious to place its policy on a settled European basis, for it was becoming more and more enmeshed in its foreign relations. In 1835 the Pope sent a brief to the deported missionaries urging them to persevere in their demand for toleration, and he reinforced them by the addition of an Irish priest, Robert Walsh. He, too, was not suffered to remain, but through the offices of Captain Vaillant, of the French corvette *Bonite*, and the British consul, he was granted respite until the arrival of a British man-of-war provided he did not in the meantime attempt to propagate his doctrines.

The matter of the Roman Catholics came to a head in 1837. Once more Father Bachelot attempted to land, and was arrested. At this juncture the French commodore, Dupetit Thouars, put in an appearance, and under the guns of a French and a British warship the priests were landed. Both commanders regarded the Protestant missionaries as the mainspring of the opposition, and took up a strong attitude towards them, refusing even to accept their services as interpreters. It was eventually agreed that the priests should remain only until a favourable opportunity should present itself of taking their departure. A more conciliatory influence appeared with the arrival of H.M.S. *Imogene*. On the captain's advice the priests left at the end of the year. Dupetit Thouars concluded a treaty guaranteeing most-favoured-nation treatment for the French.

What happened in Hawaii was just what was to happen in Tahiti a few years later. In both cases the French Navy insisted on tolerance for the Roman Catholics, and at the same time secured reciprocal treatment for their nationàls.

**The Declaration of Rights.**—In June 1839 the king proclaimed a declaration of rights for the benefit of his subjects. All the old feudal privileges were swept away, and full constitutional freedom was granted, with liberty of conscience and a just code of laws. In framing this code Kamehameha III. had the assistance of the missionary Richards, who had relinquished his spiritual duties and assumed the position of counsellor and teacher of political economy. Incidentally this code contained the first steps towards the individualisation of land titles, a most important step for the advancement of native races in the Pacific.

Later in the year the French naval commander La Place

complained of the treatment of French subjects, and demanded a security of 20,000 dollars for the good behaviour of the islanders. As in other cases the demand had to be conceded, and as in other cases, too, it was the foreign residents—this time the Americans—who came to the rescue and subscribed the money to buy off the anger of the frigate.

In spite of the good feeling between Hawaii and England, it was already the fact that American ideas vitalised Hawaiian institutions, and America was the chief benefactor of the infant kingdom. Under the constitution of 1840 the king governed through a parliament consisting of a house of fifteen hereditary nobles and seven representatives, who all sat together. At a very early stage the reins of power fell into the hands of the American residents, or the half-castes, already a very important body. Wilkes in 1840 found Kamehameha pining for a new treaty with the United States and a closer understanding, and regretting bitterly that he had ever allowed foreigners such a free hand in his realm.<sup>1</sup>

The United States had not yet developed any Pacific policy, but it is interesting to note Wilkes's opinion of the importance of Hawaii. Writing in 1842 he said the want of a good port which could be defended against a strong naval force made Hawaii of little political importance. Its occupation would be so costly that its neutrality was probably on that account secure. This fact the maritime powers had tacitly acknowledged, and Hawaii seemed likely to enjoy for many years the national independence which Kamehameha was busy buttressing by foreign treaties. Wilkes foresaw, however, that the group must eventually become dependent on the power that held Oregon and California, since they could supply these provinces with tropical products. America's only interest in Hawaii was as a small market for manufactures and a place of convenience for the American whaling fleet, and these considerations were well secured by Hawaii's neutrality.

**An International Imbroglia.**—In 1842 Hawaii became involved in a tangle of difficulties with France and England. In August a French corvette arrived with evident signs of displeasure. No salutes were exchanged. On the contrary the commander lodged an immediate complaint that the La Place convention was not being observed and that French citizens were being grossly insulted. The king courteously declared that the treaty had been scrupulously

<sup>1</sup> *Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition*, by Charles Wilkes.

carried out, and the corvette sailed away, threatening the terrors of Dupetit Thouars himself as soon as he should be free to leave the affairs of the new protectorate of Tahiti.

Meanwhile Charlton, the British consul, made land claims which Kamehameha could not admit, and the troubles of the little kingdom seemed very hopeless. Opportunely at this moment arrived two governors of the Hudson Bay Company, Sir George Simpson and Dr M'Laughlin, interested in the trading connections of the new colony on the Pacific sea-board of Canada. They were so convinced of the injustice which was sought to be imposed upon Hawaii, that they advised the king to send commissioners to lay his case before the President of the United States and the rulers of Europe. Appointed chief commissioner himself, Sir George left for Europe by way of Siberia, and at the same moment Charlton left on a counter mission.

Some members of the government commission, who went first to Washington, were fortunate enough to receive from the Secretary of State (Daniel Webster) a formal recognition of independence which greatly strengthened their hands:—

"The Government of the Sandwich Islands," he wrote, "ought to be respected. No power ought to take possession of the islands either as an acquisition or for the purposes of colonisation; and no power ought to seek for any undue control over the existing government or any exclusive privileges or preferences in matters of commerce."<sup>1</sup>

**Recognition of Hawaiian Independence.**—Lord Aberdeen in England at first declined to receive the commissioners as representing an independent state, or to negotiate a treaty, alleging that the king did not govern but was exclusively under the influence of American missionaries to the detriment of British interests. The commissioners were, however, by the introduction of King Leopold of Belgium, received with the greatest kindness in March by M. Guizot, who at once engaged on behalf of the French Government to recognise the state of Hawaii. Learning then of the actual state of affairs, Aberdeen promised to remove the consul, and on 1st April 1843 he announced that it had been decided to recognise Hawaiian independence.

**Lord George Paulet's Protectorate.**—But while things were going so smoothly in Europe they were developing

<sup>1</sup> *A Brief History of the Hawaiian People*, by W. D. Alexander, 1891.

furiously on the spot. Admiral Thomas, the British Commander-in-Chief in the Pacific, received at Valparaiso an urgent request to intervene in the trouble at Honolulu, and he despatched H.M.S. *Carysfort* (Captain Lord George Paulet) on the errand. The commander approached the inquiry in an unhappy temper by withholding all salutes, and, accepting the story of the partisans of the absent consul, he delivered a series of point-blank demands for redress. Too weak to resist them, the king complied under protest, appealing to the justice of the British Government. Other demands followed, and in despair Kamehameha threw himself on the mercy of his extortioner by a temporary cession of his kingdom to Lord George Paulet.

It was on the forty-ninth anniversary of the cession by Kamehameha I. to George III. that the British colours were hoisted ashore and saluted by the *Carysfort*. The commander and his lieutenant were two of the four commissioners he himself appointed to administer the government pending the expected ratification of the cession. Their conduct was high-handed and thorough-going in the extreme. Every Hawaiian flag was destroyed. British registers were given to all Hawaiian ships. The Government ships were taken as tenders to the *Carysfort*. Trial by jury was suspended. Extra customs duties were imposed to defray the costs of the commission itself. A native soldiery, "The Queen's Regiment," was embodied and charged to the public account.

So the commission raged for five months. One by one its moderate members dropped off. But the naval officers were undaunted. At the end of July a United States commodore insisted on saluting the Hawaiian flag and protested against the proceedings of the commission. A few days later H.M.S. *Dublin* sailed into the bay flying the pennant of the commander-in-chief. Admiral Thomas at once ordered the restoration of the sovereignty to Kamehameha, and with dignity and courtesy proclaimed the restoration and saluted the Hawaiian flag:—

"Her Majesty sincerely desires," the proclamation read, "that King Kamehameha should be treated as an independent sovereign, leaving the administration of justice in his own hands."

At the same time a convention of ten articles,<sup>1</sup> safeguarding British interests, was drawn up and signed. There was great rejoicing throughout the unhappy little kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> *Hertslet's Treaties*, vol. vii., p. 961.



On 28th November the governments of England and France made a joint declaration to the following effect :—

“Taking into consideration the existence in the Sandwich Islands of a government capable of providing for the regularity of its relations with foreign nations, the Queen of England and the King of the French have thought it right to engage reciprocally to consider the Sandwich Islands as an independent state, and never to take possession either directly or under the title of a protectorate or under any other form, of any part of the territory of which they are composed.”<sup>1</sup>

**The New Treaties.**—Great Britain appointed a new consul-general in place of the offending official, and the United States sent a special commissioner to represent it at Hawaii for the future. The Legislative Council was again opened by the king in 1846, in the most ceremonious fashion. The restored independence was, in fact, signalised in the fullest possible manner. On 26th March 1846, the British consul-general signed with the Hawaiian Minister of Foreign Affairs at Honolulu a new convention confirming the mutual agreements already existing for reciprocal privileges. By Article III. it was agreed that a British subject accused of any crime should be judged not otherwise than “by a jury composed of native or foreign residents proposed by the British consul and accepted by the Government of the Sandwich Islands.” It was further agreed that British goods imported into the kingdom should not be taxed more than 5 per cent. through the customs.<sup>2</sup>

France sent a special commissioner to conclude an identical treaty, and to repay the indemnity of 20,000 dollars which had been exacted by La Place. Towards the end of the same year the independent status of Hawaii was more clearly marked than ever by the conclusion of a treaty with the King of Denmark, which is described by W. D. Alexander as “the first fair and honourable treaty with this country.”

**New French Demands.**—But this happy state of affairs was short-lived. In 1849 the French admiral Tromelin made a new series of demands on the score of non-fulfilment of the treaty. On their being rejected he took possession of the fort, the Government offices, the custom-house, and the king's yacht. Formal protest was of course lodged by the American and British consuls, and the admiral did not proceed further. Next year another French commander arrived to push the demands, but the appearance of the

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1899, cix., C. 9088.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1847, lxx., No. 841.

United States warship *Vandalia* off Honolulu was followed by a moderation of the complaints: and the matter dropped.

The reciprocity treaty made with the United States at the end of 1849 is interesting inasmuch as it provides for free access to Hawaiian ports for steamers carrying American mails on the new ocean routes to the East.<sup>1</sup> From this date Hawaii acquires quite a new significance for America, and it is soon evident that the only possible departure from neutrality and independence is annexation or protection by the United States. The group becomes, in fact, an adjunct to the Pacific states.

A new treaty with England was signed in 1851 opening the ports of Hilo, Kealakekua, and Hanalei to whalers, and granting full access and facilities in Hawaiian ports for British mail steamers.<sup>2</sup>

**Feebleness of the Native Government.**—The failure of the native kingdom was fairly conclusive by the middle of the century. This was not from any failure of its monarchs to march with the times and to breathe the modern spirit of democracy into their institutions. On the contrary, they made frequent concessions on constitutional lines. The Bill of Rights was amplified in 1852 by the grant of universal suffrage, vote by ballot, payment of members of parliament, and abolition of the property qualification. The social state of the kingdom, too, was most advanced, thanks largely to the influence which the American residents had in the Government. Hawaii had, indeed, achieved a state of civilisation and enlightenment most creditable to the Polynesian race. But the Government was nevertheless too feeble to have any hope of holding its own for long as an independent state. Irregular pressure was constantly being exerted, and in 1851 it again placed itself under the temporary protection of the United States to ward off the importunities of aggrieved nations.

Thenceforward the Government was constantly distracted by threats of filibustering expeditions from the mainland of California, whither the goldfields had attracted a wild and undisciplined population of miners from all parts of the world. Commercial reasons favoured annexation by America, but here again the missionary influence was exerted against absorption by a great power.

The real source of weakness was the continued decrease of the native population. Between 1832 and 1866 it fell

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Sen. Docs., 61st Congress, 2nd Sess., vol. xlvii., p. 908.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1852-3, cii., No. 1558; Hertslet, vol. ix., p. 685.

from 130,000 to 63,000, and the virility of the Government diminished accordingly. But the ideals of the governors remained high, and having in 1857 despatched a ship to take formal possession of a number of outlying islands, the king in 1861 sent a mission to the three great maritime powers seeking a joint guarantee of his country's independence. But it was impossible to turn back the hands of the clock. Lacking a reciprocity agreement with its only possible protector, the United States, Hawaii languished for want of industrial stimulus, and passed through a series of political changes and experiments.

**Reciprocity with the United States.**—It was not until 1875 that the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States was concluded and finally ratified,<sup>1</sup> *ipso facto* providing a market for as much coffee, sugar, wool, and hides as the kingdom could produce. The effect was instant. There being no sufficient supply of native labour for the development of these industries, commissioners were sent abroad to all the corners of the earth to find them. In September 1878 the first party of Portuguese labourers arrived from the Azores and Madeira, and thirty years later a further immigration from that quarter brought the number in Hawaii up to 8500. Chinese came in great numbers, and showed such a tendency to intermarry and overrun the country that twice within a few years the immigration was stopped by arrangement between the governments. There was more difficulty in obtaining Japanese labourers, and it was not until 1884 that the agreement was made with the Japanese Government. Then they came in sufficient numbers. Unlike the Chinese, they did not intermarry, and when the Russo-Japanese war opened a new great field for Japanese colonisation the immigration to Hawaii dried up and ceased. Only a few Polynesian kanakas were imported—from the Gilberts and other Line Islands. And they were not a success.

Early in the eighties the kingdom of Hawaii was predominantly an outlander preserve governed by foreigners and the descendants of foreigners. When von Hubner was there in 1884 there was only one native in the ministry. In a Privy Council of thirty-four members only six were natives, and of the whole judiciary only a few district judges in the interior. All the rest were Americans. The American husband of the heiress to the throne was governor of the principal island.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Sen. Docs., 61st Congress, 2nd Sess., vol. xlvii., p. 915.

<sup>2</sup> *Through the British Empire*, by Baron von Hubner, 1886.

In 1900 the population of the whole group was 90,000, of whom only 40,000 were Hawaiians and half-castes. Chinese and Japanese numbered 27,000; but the reins of power were in the hands of the 7495 "foreign Hawaiians" and the 1928 Americans. Obviously the country was heading towards a republic or annexation. Whichever it was to be, American influence must predominate. The quasi-native kingdom was allowed to continue until the nineties, though it had not an atom of real power.

**Republic and Annexation.**—The end came dramatically out of a welter of troubles. In 1893 the American-Hawaiians deposed the queen, whose policy had been reactionary in the extreme, and with the aid of a small American force called in from the steamer *Boston* by the United States minister, they set up a republic. President Harrison withdrew a treaty of annexation which was before Congress and allowed the matter to drop.

When Cleveland came into office he sent a commissioner paramount to investigate the affair, who, finding that the revolution was brought about by the use of an American armed force, demanded the restoration of the queen to her throne. This the republicans declined to agree to, and Congress would not intervene further. The republic was formally proclaimed in May 1894, and the queen the following year took the oath of allegiance.

President M'Kinley negotiated a new treaty of annexation in 1897, and the resolution of Congress was passed in July 1898. In the following month the sovereignty was merged in that of the United States, within a few weeks of the Spanish islands farther afield in the Pacific also coming under American dominion.

**Since the Annexation.**—Settled political conditions and an assured market for her products soon restored to Hawaii her historic prosperity. The output of sugar expanded from 13,000 tons in the year of the Reciprocity Treaty (1874) to 555,000 tons in 1911. The development was all within the orbit of the United States. In 1911, 81 per cent. of the imports were from the States, and only 6½ per cent. from British countries; while 98 per cent. of the exports were to the United States. The high protective tariffs of the United States practically ousted the European exporter,<sup>1</sup> and the shipping laws as a general rule excluded foreign vessels even from carrying passengers between Honolulu and Vancouver, a distance of 2100 miles. These laws were only

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1909, xcix., C. 4446.



relaxed for a few years pending the establishment of American shipping lines on a competitive basis.

The sea distances of the Pacific give Hawaii a strategic value—to America—considerably beyond what Wilkes predicted. Honolulu is 3810 miles from Auckland, 4410 from Sydney, 3400 from Yokohama, and 4890 from Manila. It is consequently a valuable outpost towards Asia, and a port of call and refuge for vessels bound both to the Far East and to Australia and New Zealand. The mail steamers to Australasia have used it continuously as a port of call. The United States has spent a great deal of money in improving and fortifying Pearl Harbour.

Under the governmental act of April 1900 Hawaii became a territory of the United States, and is governed by a Senate of fifteen members and a House of Representatives of thirty, meeting twice a year at Honolulu.

**The Leadership of Polynesia.**—The schemes of expansion and hegemony which marked the last decades of Hawaii's quasi-independence came to their full glory and climax in the reign of King Kalakaua (1874-91). They were somewhat ambitious and visionary, but something of leadership in the Hawaiians that deserved merit manifested itself many years earlier.

The first evidences of this were of a purely missionary and national character. The Protestant Church in the group made such satisfactory progress after the first native evangelist was ordained in 1843, that about 1863 the American Board of Missions felt justified in declaring it self-supporting and capable of managing its own affairs. It had, indeed, all the attributes of a self-governing Christian community, and was already imbued with a robust zeal for foreign missions. The Hawaiian Society for Foreign Missions was formed in 1850, and two years later, reinforced by some new missionaries from Boston, it sent out its first offshoot—to Kusaie, or Strong's Island—in the Carolines, nearly 3000 miles to the westward. The second mission settled at Ponape, also in the Carolines, and later ones in the no less savage Gilbert and Ellice groups, near the equator. But the most noteworthy success of these Polynesian apostles was far to the southward, at the inhospitable Marquesas, from which the London Missionary Society had been quickly expelled in 1797 and the American Mission in 1833. The French authorities looked with less jealousy on the Polynesian missionaries than on the British and American Protestants, and when the Hawaiian evangelists

went down in 1853 they held their ground and made many converts. To the present day traces of these courageous Christians are to be found in remote islands scattered all over the face of the Pacific.

Meanwhile the Roman Catholic religion also thrived under the privileges secured for it by the intervention of Dupetit Thouars and La Place. A new diocese was founded in the islands in 1842 under the name of Arathea, borrowed from an extinct bishopric of old, and to the propaganda at Lyons was entrusted its nurture and maintenance.

**A Pacific Federation.**—There was something of this national and missionary spirit in the impulse which prompted the Hawaiian Parliament to take action when in 1879 an aggressive treaty-making movement by England, Germany, and the United States seemed to threaten the independence of more than one Polynesian state. In 1880 the Legislative Assembly adopted a resolution recommending the king to appoint a commissioner to the states and peoples of Polynesia to represent "the enlightened, humane, and hospitable spirit of our Government and people to the kindred states of the Pacific Ocean." It was proposed that instead of permitting these "states" to be annexed, they should be placed under the joint protectorate of England, France, Germany, and the United States "in a similar manner that Samoa is governed." In the light of subsequent events the wording was not very happy. It was quite true that the Hawaiians enjoyed the blessings of peace, ease, and some civilisation, but the kingdom was only a native one in name. It was controlled entirely by whites and white interests, and the native population had decreased in numbers very gravely.

To begin with, early in 1883 Hawaii sent two commissioners to the Gilbert Islands, perhaps the least civilised at that time of all the Polynesian groups. At the same time a formal protest was delivered to Great Britain against the annexation of any territory in Polynesia (Consul Stanley to Lord Granville, 9th September 1883). This protest set forth that annexation would subvert in other groups "the conditions for favourable national development which have been so happily accorded to the Hawaiian nation." The king felt it a duty to offer advice and assistance to his kindred peoples, and for this purpose was sending a commissioner to advise them in their national affairs. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, who signed this protest, was Walter M. Gibson, who had some time earlier been expelled



from the Dutch Indies on charges of filibustering. A similar protest was sent to the Intercolonial Convention at Sydney in December 1883, through the Hawaiian consul at Hobart.<sup>1</sup>

The protest, coming as it did during the New Guinea discussions, had no weight or relevance at all, partly because of the extreme distance of New Guinea from Hawaii, and partly because the Papuans are not Polynesians at all. Consequently it could be ignored.

**Intervention in Samoa.**—But the intervention of King Kalakaua in the tangled affairs of Samoa was quite a different matter. They were kindred nations, closely allied and speaking almost the same tongue. In June 1886 the Hawaiian minister in Washington informed the British and German ambassadors that his king proposed sending an envoy to Samoa to endeavour to effect a reconciliation between the native factions, and he looked for the support of the Great Powers in his philanthropic work (Mr Sackville-West to Lord Rosebery, 24th June 1886). The minister actually visited Great Britain and Germany to enlist sympathy for the mission and "consideration for the Polynesian communities which still remain independent." But it attracted little attention. At the moment the Powers were sending their own commissioners to discuss the affairs of Samoa.

Six months later, though, fearing that encouragement from outside might bolster up recalcitrant factions in Samoa, Lord Iddesleigh sharply warned Hawaii not to interfere. But the interference was in active progress. The Hon. John E. Bush, a half-caste Hawaiian, had left for Samoa as "Minister Plenipotentiary to Samoa and Tonga and High Commissioner to the independent chiefs and peoples of Polynesia." He travelled in a Hawaiian warship, the *Kaimiloa*, with a retinue and much éclat, and his mission was "to try to realise for the inhabitants the blessings of confirmed independence and a reliable administration." Kalakaua disclaimed any intention of interfering, but hoped that the presence of his envoy would conduce to a rational settlement of difficulties. He proposed to approach also Tonga, already guaranteed by the maritime powers, and other groups which he conceived to be in the position of "mere waifs to be seized upon by the first strong hand that may be stretched out to take them."<sup>2</sup>

**A Comic Mission.**—Mr Bush was received by Malietoa,

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 3863.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 5629.

the paramount chief of Samoa, with every expression of joy, especially when he expressed his desire that Samoa should be able to maintain "peaceful stability and perfect autonomy" by the help of the friendly advice of Kalakaua. He proposed to confer the Grand Cross of the Royal Order of the Star of Oceania on Malietoa, but was unable owing to the insignia having been miscarried in the post.

Bush caused an expensive house to be built in a prominent position in Apia, and announced that the *Kaimiloa* would be stationed in Samoa (Acting-Consul H. F. Symonds to Marquess of Salisbury, 22nd February 1887). An early outcome of the mission was a convention for political federation with Kalakaua. Acting on his recognised kingship and on the advice of his two legislative chambers, Malietoa pledged himself to conform to "whatever measures may hereafter be adopted by His Majesty King Kalakaua and be mutually agreed upon to carry into effect this political federation."

Of the three treaty powers interested in Samoa, Germany alone seemed to take the matter seriously. Salisbury would not go further than to say that Malietoa had been ill-advised in making such an alliance without consulting the powers. He suggested a joint intimation to Hawaii that the affair was likely to produce anarchy and disorder and could not be recognised (Salisbury to Sir L. Sackville-West, 31st May 1887).<sup>1</sup>

Bush had in the meantime been creating something of a stir in Apia. A great saloon was erected near the Embassy, and here the Samoan chiefs were entertained in lavish style, and not altogether temperately. R. L. Stevenson gives a most entertaining account of the whole mission, of which he remarks that "the most obvious fault was that it came too late." The Embassy commenced with a show of extravagance. When Bush entertained "all decency appears to have been forgotten. High chiefs were seen to dance, and day found the house carpeted with slumbering grandees, who must be roused, doctored with coffee, and sent home." Malietoa himself protested against the debauchery, and after a few weeks of bootless intrigue with various factions and parties "the rough and tumble embassy withdrew on borrowed money."<sup>2</sup> The *Kaimiloa* passed through a series of accidents and mutinies and vicissitudes and she regained Honolulu in time to find that there had been a peaceful revolution. The first act of the new government was to

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5629.

<sup>2</sup> *A Footnote to History*, by R. L. Stevenson.

recall the expensive tourists, and so, apparently, to avoid a rupture between Germany and Hawaii.

The only importance this absurd episode has was given to it by Bismarck in his celebrated thunderbolt of 1st August 1887, in which he attributes the outbreak of civil strife to "the unwarranted interference of the Hawaiian Government" (Prince Bismarck to Count Hatzfeldt).<sup>1</sup>

"So might a fly irritate Cæsar," remarks Stevenson.

Thus ended the dream of a Polynesian Empire. When his recall arrived Bush was passing between the camps of the opposing parties. Fearing to return to Hawaii he made his abode at Apia.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5629.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LABOUR TRAFFIC

**Origin of the Demand.**—No sooner had the young colonies of Australia begun to make a considerable expansion than the lack of a numerous working class, as Gibbon Wakefield had foreseen, made itself felt with particular severity. Even so early it was a matter of great difficulty to induce labourers to remain for long in the lonely “back-blocks” if they had any opportunity of regaining the towns, where the conditions of life were so much more attractive. When the moral sense of the community had already condemned transportation, the urgent need for labour, pressing periodically on all the colonies in turn, was one of the few arguments for its continuance.

Before the middle of the nineteenth century numerous individual natives were brought from the islands to Australian ports by whalers and traders. They were chiefly from the nearer groups—New Guinea, the New Hebrides, and the Solomons—the nearest of which was some 800 miles from Brisbane. They were a strong, able-bodied race and showed a distinct aptitude for pastoral life. When development spread northward from New South Wales into Queensland and assumed there the aspect of planting, the demand for such labour was intensified, and the “trade” in kanakas<sup>1</sup> grew naturally and freely out of these necessities.

“**Blackbirding.**”—The trade in native labourers dates at least as far back as 1847. At any rate, in that year the crews of two British traders, the *Portania* and the *Velocity*, while “trading for cannibals,” came into collision with the natives of Rotuma, an outlying island to the north of Fiji. According to the report of the naval captain who investigated the affair, they were endeavouring, by fair means or foul, to obtain from the New Hebrides, Rotuma, and the Gilberts,

<sup>1</sup> Polynesian word for “man ;” Maori, tangata.

natives who would eventually be disposed of as shepherds and herdsmen in Australia.<sup>1</sup>

Sir George Grey, then Governor of New Zealand, hearing of the outrage, instructed Captain Maxwell of H.M.S. *Dido*, to proceed to the spot and make full inquiry. The incident arose, as he supposed, out of attempts to seize natives for importation to New South Wales, where they might be employed as labourers. He accordingly sent the facts to the governor of that colony and instructed his own officials to do all in their power to detect the miscreants.<sup>2</sup>

Earl Grey fully approved of this action. "I need not assure you," he added, "of the most anxious desire of Her Majesty's Government to do all in their power to prevent the ill-treatment of the natives of those islands by British subjects." He had pointed out to the Governor of New South Wales, he said, "that one of the most effectual means of guarding against such abuses is to exercise a vigilant superintendence over the treatment of any natives who may be brought to New South Wales, in order effectually to prevent them being brought into any relations to their employees which may approach to a condition of slavery. If this precaution is strictly observed I am induced to hope that individuals will not entertain such expectation of advantage from bringing these islanders to New South Wales as to induce them to pursue that object by improper means."<sup>3</sup>

The conditions of employment had as yet little resemblance to slavery. In fact, most of the islanders who came for this purpose were probably better off in Australia than in their native state, for food was plentiful, life secure, and the work not too hard. The labour traffic, or "blackbirding," as it came to be called, cannot be said in its early days to have had any moral sanction, for the mere lack of control gave it a tendency towards the conditions of the old slave trade. And before the intercourse was well established some very distressing tales of cruelty and injustice were told.

Australia was on the threshold of an industrial development, and had already visions of becoming a great sugar and cotton-producing country. But for this a supply of labour was essential—efficient and cheap and preferably non-European. The trade assumed its worst aspects when directed towards the plantations of Queensland and of Fiji.

As early as 1861 the Secretary of State, in response to a

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Bishop Selwyn*, by Rev. W. H. Tucker, 1879.

<sup>2</sup> P.R.O., C.O. 209, vol. lix.

<sup>3</sup> P.R.O., C.O. 406, vol. ix.



petition, sanctioned the indenturing of coolie labour from Asia for the tropical and subtropical parts of Queensland, provided some such system as obtained in Mauritius and the West Indies were devised for their protection.<sup>1</sup> That this did not go further is undoubtedly due to the new source of supply which had opened up in the islands.

**Captain Towns's Experiment.**—The first appearance of South Sea Island labourers, or kanakas, for work on plantations in Australia was in 1863, when Captain Towns, a merchant and shipowner of Sydney and a member of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, brought sixty of them from the islands in one of his own vessels, and indentured them to work on his new cotton plantation near Brisbane. In the agreements, which were dated May 1863, he covenanted to pay each man 10s. per month "in such trade as he may prefer at the end of his agreement, and to return him to his home within twelve months, should he require such."

Towns is described by Sir George Bowen, then Governor of Queensland, as "a highly respectable and influential merchant," and there is evidence that he had ordered every kindness to be shown to his kanakas. He had communicated with the missionaries in the islands and announced his intention, if the scheme prospered, "to bring over the wives and families of these poor fellows as a separate race to the ordinary coolie from India." The scheme did prosper, at least for a time, for the yield of cotton had grown in two years from 38,730 lb. to 183,630 lb.<sup>2</sup>

But unfortunately all who in the succeeding years entered on the employment of kanakas, or obtained them from the islands, were not actuated by the same humane intentions as Towns. There was no Queen's law in the Pacific. There was for a time no control or regulation in Australia beyond that provided for whites by the Master and Servants Act: and within five years blackbirding had become almost as great a scandal as the slave-trading of a generation or two earlier. The plantations of Queensland and Fiji were at that time almost the only market for black labour, and the outrages of the trade were nearly all traceable to one or the other of these markets.

The British Government soon had reports which caused it grave uneasiness. By 1867 it was demanding explanations of Queensland and calling for reports from its naval commanders in the Pacific.

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1861, No. 2890.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1867-8, No. 391.

**A Demand for Control.**—In Australia also the Queensland Government was being taken to task. Replying to local representations early in 1867, it agreed to bring in further legislation if it should be considered that the Master and Servants Act (25 Vict. No. 11) was not sufficient to protect the kanakas and secure the proper enforcement of contracts. The abuses were many-sided. In the first place natives were enticed on board the recruiting ships by offers of presents and then forcibly kidnapped. This practice was well established, and was responsible for many of the later massacres of ships' crews and burning of the ships themselves. In other cases natives were induced to sign contracts in good faith, the terms and period of which were not understood. The conditions under which they were carried to their destination were in many cases shockingly insanitary and uncomfortable. Finally, many of the natives were cheated as to the length of their indentures, and kept at work for a year or more beyond the time for which they thought they had contracted. There was, too, a good deal of dishonesty in regard to the "trade" in which they received their payment at the end of the agreement; and there were many authenticated cases in which they were returned, not to their own homes, but to hostile villages where they were attacked, or where, if they had been paid in arms and ammunition, they themselves were the aggressors.

Captain Luce, of H.M.S. *Esk*, after an exhaustive investigation of "outrages" by natives on trading ships at the islands, came to the conclusion that most of them were committed out of revenge for the carrying off of their able-bodied men. "I know from my own experience," he writes, "that many of these vessels trading to the New Hebrides are manned by rough and very lawless men who, finding themselves beyond the reach of any civilised power, behave towards the natives with injustice. It is to be hoped that vessels of the squadron will be able frequently to visit the islands and to see that the trade is carried on with justice and according to law." The less logical but almost inevitable corollary is recorded by Captain W. H. Blake, of H.M.S. *Falcon*, who, owing to the hostility of the natives of Hinchinbrook Island, in the New Hebrides, was unable to have any communication with them. "I deemed it the wisest course of action," he writes (to Commodore Lambert, 4th August 1867), "that would have the appearance of exacting reparation for their savage conduct—of which it was afterwards proved there was not the slightest doubt—

and at the same time impress them with the power of a ship of war when she comes to enforce retributive justice for the same." Accordingly he landed a force and burned some villages and canoes.

Unfortunately the crime and the punishment followed in a vicious circle, and the best sailors and missionaries deplored the necessity which introduced the British man-of-war to so many islands in a purely punitive capacity. Yet it was a virtual necessity, for the islander, too often aggrieved, could not distinguish between the Queen's ship and the slave-trader, and showed a hostile front to both.

**The Emigration Commissioners.**—The Home Government was harassed by constant questions in the House of Commons and became very restive, urging Queensland to greater activity in repressing abuses. That quaint body, the Emigration Commissioners, to whom the Colonial Office in the sixties turned with almost childish faith for advice in its difficulties, could see no objection to the employment of kanakas, provided they were carried in licensed ships and were protected by Government regulations. The Commissioners shared with the Secretary of State an extraordinary belief in the power of the islanders to understand written contracts: a belief palpably too sanguine, as all the evidence from the islands shows (T. W. C. Murdoch to the Colonial Office, 23rd December 1867). They approached the subject in the preconceived belief that things were no worse than might be expected; and even when the investigations of the Royal Navy had established the iniquities beyond any possible doubt, the Commissioners were still blithely writing: "Nothing but clear proof of grave abuse would justify the interference of the Government, and as far as our information goes no such abuse has yet been proved" (*Ibid.*, 6th May 1868).

As the nearest group to Australia, and thickly populated, the New Hebrides suffered very severely from the depredations of the "blackbirders." A memorial from the Presbyterian missionaries there showed that by September 1867 several small islands had been quite denuded of their male population, many of whom had been taken away by fraud. The removal of the best specimens had greatly reduced the standard of the populations. The men often did not return, and those who were left developed bad and dangerous characters from contact with the traders.

The New South Wales Government was appealed to, apparently as that of the mother colony; but the Parkes

Ministry held that the traffic was Queensland's affair and did not constitute a case for legislative interference by New South Wales. It did, however, transmit the memorial to the Home Government for consideration.

**Degenerating into Slavery.**—The Admiralty probably understood the problem better than the Colonial Office, for it had numerous reports from its excellent system of government by commodore, which contributed so powerfully before the arrival of a proper jurisdiction to rehabilitate the British name in the South Seas and to purge the islands of their worst abuses. And the Admiralty told the Colonial Office plainly (7th December 1867) that the traffic was rapidly degenerating into slave-hunting and slave-trading, and that the system of kidnapping and piracy led by a natural process to the murder of innocent white men visiting the islands for the purposes of lawful trade. Whatever other authorities might think, the Admiralty gave its frank opinion that no proper and efficient control could possibly be exercised over the recruiting of island labourers.

Thus in the short space of five years the trade had become slave-hunting pure and simple. This aspect of the business was not mitigated in the least by the fact that most of the employers both in Australia and Fiji treated their labourers with consideration and humanity. In the absence of any jurisdiction, the recruiting conditions were bound to become progressively worse. Possibly the majority of the vessels engaged were British; but this did not make the task of the British Navy any the easier, for a master against whom abuses were alleged could generally escape punishment by changing the nationality of his vessel. It is questionable, too, whether the bulk of the kanakas were destined for British employers. Fiji was not yet a British colony, and many of them went also to Samoa, where the planters were of various nationalities. Nor did the Colonial Office at all acquiesce in the public opinion of the "beaches," which said that eventually Fiji must be British. The police of the Pacific was a great and a gratuitous task for the British Navy; but it was a task in conformity with its traditions.

**France lodges a Complaint.**—Early in 1868 the labour traffic assumed an international aspect as the outcome of a complaint from the French governor of New Caledonia (M. Guillaïn) that British vessels had been taking men by force from the Loyalty Islands, a dependency of his colony. "Ces sont des actes de quasi-piraterie qui privent la colonie des bras qui lui font déjà tant défaut." Whitehall replied



that it was well aware that "lawless and cruel acts had been committed in these seas by Europeans, which had led to savage reprisals on the part of the natives. They found great difficulty in repressing such of these outrages as were chargeable against British subjects," and asked for details of any particular cases to enable them to devise a more effective method of control.

The British Government had not quite accepted the view of the Admiralty that the trade was altogether bad. It informed the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society that there was no evidence that men of good position in Australia were engaged in it, or that any of the islanders in Queensland had been kidnapped, and it quoted naval reports in support of this statement.<sup>1</sup>

**An Ocean without Jurisdiction.**—It was soon clear that whatever Australia might do about the traffic some sort of jurisdiction would have to be set up to cope with the abuses amongst the far-flung and remote islands. The first Act of police for the South Seas was 57 Geo. III., c. 53, passed in 1817. It provided that manslaughters and murders committed in New Zealand or Otaheite (Tahiti), or at any place not within the British dominions, or subject to any European state or power, or to the United States of America, by any person sailing in or belonging to a British vessel, or who had sailed in a British vessel and had left it to live ashore, might be tried and punished in any part of the British dominions.

In 1824, c. 96 empowered the Supreme Court of New South Wales to take cognisance of offences committed by British subjects in the Pacific, and five years later 9 Geo. IV., c. 43, authorised the courts of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land to deal with all offences whatever committed by British subjects at sea, in New Zealand, Tahiti, or any place in the Indian or Pacific Ocean not subject to any foreign jurisdiction and where the admiral had jurisdiction. A year or two later, with very good reason, Lord Howick introduced a bill greatly widening the powers of the Government of New South Wales in respect to the Pacific, but it lapsed with the session. It was one of the main reasons for the foundation of the colony of New Zealand in 1839 that the British Government felt compelled to do something to control the lawless British subjects who had settled there, to the detriment of the natives.

These statutes did not at all meet the new position.

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1867, xlviii., No. 391.



There were innumerable hiding places for evil-doers in the remote islands; there were no consular powers to send suspects for trial to British colonies; and there were many facilities by which captains against whom anything was alleged could either change their nationality or disappear into the China trade for a few years.

**Queensland Rebuked.**—Granville was always slow to move, but the humanitarian interest in Parliament continually harassed him about the labour trade and stirred him to activity. He took Governor Blackall seriously to task for his apparent failure to appreciate the responsibility resting on him as representative of the Queen in the colony which was being indicted:—

“I wish you clearly to remember that the matter is not a mere colonial question. It is a matter affecting foreign though uncivilised countries, and the honour of the British name in connection with them. It is a matter in which H.M. Government feel the deepest interest and in respect to which you, as their officer, are under a most serious responsibility. It is for you to take care that the Home Government is not misled but receives accurate and fullest information respecting what is going on in Queensland, and to use your utmost influence to secure that the immigrants receive in relation to their employers that special treatment which immigrant labourers receive in other colonies to which coloured immigrants, as they are called, proceed, and without which they must be at the mercy of those about them.”

The Home Government, he said, wished to be in a position to vindicate the character of Queensland if the abuses did not exist.<sup>1</sup>

The Emigration Commissioners reassured Granville with the opinion that Queensland had done all it could by legislation, provided the executive administered the Act with sufficient stringency, but they suggested that Imperial legislation was necessary to deal with Australian vessels outside territorial waters.

**Mr Thurston's Vigorous Conduct.**—Fiji, by its central position amongst the islands, was an important post in dealing with the traffic, and England was fortunate in having as consul here Mr J. B. Thurston, an official already noted for his courage and his unique knowledge of the natives of the Pacific. Lacking the powers of a magistrate, which seemed so essential in the peculiar nature of the trade, largely on his personal responsibility he took the strongest

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1868-9, xliii., No. 408.

possible stand on the question of the labour traffic. He insisted on British shipowners taking out licenses before carrying natives, and before allowing any indentured kanakas who came to Fiji to proceed to the plantations, he examined them personally at the consulate and satisfied himself that they understood their engagement. As the servant of the British Government he was hampered by no vested interests or local pressure, and he was absolutely fearless.

Thurston's candid opinion in September 1868, when the trade had already been condemned by the commodores and the missionaries, was that the abuses were not beyond his own power to control and redress. At the same time he admitted that "no authority exists in Fiji for the due protection of these people should necessity arise, or consular authority be resisted." For that reason he suggested—there being no established government at all in Fiji—that the consul should be armed with magisterial powers to compel British employers at any rate to carry out their contracts.<sup>1</sup>

**Lord Clarendon takes Action.**—The opinion of Commander Palmer, R.N., of H.M.S. *Rosario*, after a thorough cruise of the western islands as far north as the line, was that the labour traffic was "in no way removed from a regular slave trade."<sup>2</sup> It was on this text that Lord Clarendon, prompted by "humanity and public feeling," addressed a circular to all the consuls in the Pacific in the interests of immigrant labourers. Well aware of what Thurston had done, how "necessity and convenience had practically secured to him a certain extent of jurisdiction, more or less recognised by the resident community," he nevertheless felt that "an intolerable responsibility would be thrown upon Her Majesty's Government if the present state of things were allowed to continue" (Circular to Consuls, 7th July 1869).

The Queensland Polynesian Labourers Act was assented to in March 1868, yet within twelve months there was a recrudescence of outrages, and Clarendon felt strongly that unless "the cupidity of speculators in human labour" could be checked there must be immediate Imperial legislation (Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 3rd August 1869). He appealed also to the United States to co-operate, remarking that some of the Fiji planters for whom the kanakas were being obtained were Americans, and that it was hoped to induce an emigration of cotton planters thither from the Southern states. He suggested quaintly that it was to the

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1868-9, xliii., No. 4222.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 399.

interest of the United States Government to assist to control such a community, and "operations which were likely to degenerate into a slave trade, slightly disguised." A similar invitation was held out to the North German confederation, whose subjects had large interests in Fiji.<sup>1</sup> Clarendon even went to the length of dictating to the quasi-independent government of Hawaii the conditions under which, if at all, it should convey labourers to its own plantations; but this trade—with the Gilbert Islands—fell through in 1870 for lack of success.

**A Case for Imperial Action.**—The complaints of the Governor of New Caledonia were investigated by a royal commission set up by the Government of New South Wales on a vague hint from the Imperial Government. The commissioners jealously defended the Queensland traffic against charges which it suggested could more properly be laid against Fiji, but it emphasised the advisability of more active supervision by the British Government, "in order to prevent evils which would reflect discredit on the British name." Granville admitted the force of the recommendation, but strongly urged Queensland to amend and make more stringent its Act of 1866. At the same time he inquired whether the colonies would be willing to bear a share of the expense of prosecutions under Imperial legislation.

Though very jealous of her character, Queensland refused indignantly to bear the expense of a commission appointed at the suggestion of the Imperial Government to satisfy public opinion in England. They were matters affecting Imperial interests, said the Colonial Secretary, and respecting which the Queensland Government had taken every precaution to satisfy itself (Cabinet memo. to Governor of Queensland, 15th April 1872). The governor was equally emphatic. The connection between the abuses of the Fiji trade and the colony of Queensland he "altogether and entirely repudiated," adding: "While I have little doubt that the greatest atrocities are constantly perpetrated against the islanders by Fijian vessels, I have every reason for thinking that the trade, as carried on by Queensland vessels, is free from those evils which have justly caused so much indignation" (Lord Normanby to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of British North America).

**Bishop Patteson's Death.**—Commodore Stirling's report on the trade was that the worst atrocities, including kidnapping

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 496.

and skull-hunting, occurred when kanakas were being recruited for groups other than Fiji, and at the less frequented islands. He was inclined to absolve Queensland, which had done so much by regulation. Commander Markham considered that "the nefarious system of kidnapping was practised to a most inconceivable extent, and that it actually amounted to downright slavery. Blood was shed in a most wanton manner," and "the diabolical practice of head-hunting was practised." The crux of the problem, it appeared, was that the acts complained of were for the most part committed quite out of any colonial jurisdiction, on the high seas and in savage islands. Moreover, the flags of Tahiti, Fiji, Hawaii, and the French colonies were all available to give protection to the master—British or otherwise—who might find it expedient to shed his own nationality.

Feeling in Australia was certainly stirred on the subject. The colony of Victoria felt its honour so deeply involved in a brutal outrage by a Victorian vessel that the Government agreed to go to any reasonable expenditure to seek out and repatriate the victims. The indignation came to a head with the murder of Bishop Patteson at Nukapu in 1871, an event which forced the Imperial Government to take action, and led directly to the passing of an Imperial Act.

**Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1872.**—The outcome of the negotiations and of Lord Clarendon's circular was the passing early in 1872 of the Pacific Islanders Protection Act (35 and 36 Vict., c. 19). This measure made it compulsory for every vessel engaging in the labour traffic to possess a license from the governor of one of the Australian colonies, or from a British consular officer, and it gave power to the supreme courts of all the colonies to try and punish British subjects for decoying away natives, or enlisting them against their will. The Act assumed that offenders would be tried in the courts of one of the colonies, and only made provision for obtaining evidence beyond the jurisdiction of the colonies.<sup>1</sup> Thus by slow measures was the necessary jurisdiction provided for.

Within the year or two following the passing of this Act there was a crop of more or less important prosecutions in the courts of Australia, and some severe sentences were inflicted. There were still, however, grave difficulties in bringing offenders to the colonial courts, and in dealing with those who engaged in the trade for Fiji and other islands not

<sup>1</sup> *British Rule and Jurisdiction beyond the Seas*, by H. Jenkyns.



within British jurisdiction. To cope with these the Act was amended in 1875 and greatly strengthened.

**The High Commission for the Western Pacific.**—Under this Act provision was made for the creation of a high commission for the Western Pacific, and the appointment of a high commissioner, to whom in great measure would be entrusted the operation of the Acts against the labour trade. The High Commissioner was granted jurisdiction over British subjects residing outside the British dominions in the Pacific Ocean, in the same manner as if jurisdiction had been acquired by the cession or acquisition of the territory. The Vice-Admiralty Court and the High Court of Admiralty were given special jurisdiction to condemn ships seized. The issuing of licenses now became the function of the High Commissioner alone, and he was to constitute a court having cognisance of all offences committed by British subjects in the islands and full power to deal with them. The regard for native rights was shown in the clauses saving native customs and, in accordance with traditional British policy in the Pacific, negating any presumption of authority.

The recent annexation of the colony of Fiji gave the High Commissioner what was at the time the most convenient headquarters for his duties, and in the first instance the Government determined to entrust the office to the Governor of Fiji for the time being. Sir Arthur Gordon understood this when he left England, but the arrangements for the dual appointment were not made for a long time after his departure. The celebrated Pacific Islands Order-in-Council, an instrument of 321 articles, was not published until August 1877 (*Hertslet's Treaties*, vol. xiv., pp. 871-912). It gave full powers for the appointment of deputies in convenient groups. Article 25 authorised the High Commissioner to prohibit any person dangerous to peace and good order from living in any part of the Pacific, and the succeeding article gave the power of deportation.

**Western Pacific Boundaries.**—This rather famous charter of Pacific administration made some slight attempt to define the boundaries of what had come to be known by the term "the Western Pacific." Without laying down limits, it specifically extended the operation of the Act to the following groups: Friendly Islands (Tonga), Navigators (Samoa), Union, Phoenix, Ellice, Gilbert, Marshall, Caroline, Solomon, Santa Cruz, Rotuma, New Guinea (east of the 143rd meridian E.), New Britain, New Ireland, Louisiade;



and "all other islands in the Western Pacific Ocean not being within the limits of the colonies of Fiji, Queensland, or New South Wales, and not being within the jurisdiction of any civilised power."<sup>1</sup>

**How the Act Worked.**—Sir Arthur Gordon was not long in discovering that there were weaknesses in this elaborate instrument which operated very unfairly on British subjects, while failing to repress similar crimes committed by foreigners, or to punish native outrages when they demanded punishment. The British trader and settler, being held strictly accountable to a rather sensitive régime, had no certain redress for injuries inflicted upon himself either by the natives or by his trade rivals who pleaded some other nationality. This condition produced what Gordon described as "not unnatural irritation and a sense of being treated with injustice."

Deputy commissioners were appointed at Tonga and Samoa by direction of the Secretary of State. In 1878 the Queensland Government sought and obtained for its magistrate at Thursday Island, in Torres Straits, a deputy commission for the Darnley and Murray Islands, to hold good until these islands were included within the jurisdiction of the colony. Another deputy was sent to Rotuma in 1879 in the hope of being able to curb the religious wars there. He received from the chiefs a confirmation of a previous petition for annexation, and for the next two years, pending the acceptance of the cession, he administered the island with the assistance of a council of chiefs. In 1881 Rotuma was formally annexed, and the official was sent as Deputy Commissioner to New Britain, New Ireland, and New Guinea.

**The Arms Traffic.**—The mere kidnapping of natives, bad as it was, was not the only evil rampant in the South Seas at the time. There was a good deal of unabashed piracy, thriving on the geographical circumstances of the Pacific. And there was a very discreditable traffic in arms which for many years had the approval of the colonies, at any rate as accessories. The custom grew up at an early stage of permitting kanakas on completion of their indentures to take firearms and ammunition as part of their agreed payment. Their influence on returning to their islands thus accoutred was of the worst possible description. They and their arms rendered much more fatal than formerly the internecine wars

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 3905, Report of the Commission on the W. P. Orders-in-Council.

of the tribes. The demand grew, and natives refused to sign for terms of labour abroad, unless firearms were distinctly promised as part of their "trade" at the end of the engagement.

Commissioner Gorrie in 1879 strongly urged the High Commissioner to prohibit the introduction of arms into all islands in his jurisdiction. Gordon favoured the prohibition, but saw obvious possibilities of failure. Naval co-operation between the powers was essential if foreign traders were not to step in and do precisely what British traders were to be forbidden. But here the British Government was in a dilemma, and in this as in other matters the Queensland officials did their colony a grave disservice by stubbornly opposing a necessary reform. It was seriously put forward by the Colonial Secretary that to withhold arms from returning kanakas would be regarded by them as "a repudiation of the agreements under which they were recruited," and would lead to reprisals in the islands. This was conclusive. Kimberley, who was again at the Colonial Office, saw that it was premature to seek the co-operation of other powers in putting down the arms traffic, so long as the islanders were allowed freely to procure arms and ammunition on returning from an Australian colony (Lord Kimberley to Lord Augustus Loftus, 3rd April 1881). Queensland saw the reason of the argument a little later; but still there was no power for the High Commission to interfere with foreigners.

**Government by Commodore.**—When Gordon reached the Pacific he found the widespread system of police by the British Navy—government by commodore—to be the only jurisdiction outside the limits of the colonies. The practice continued during the lapse of two years until he was appointed to the new post of High Commissioner. Just after his appointment he was kept informed of the doings of the vessels engaged on police duty in the islands. But gradually the naval authorities dropped the practice of sending him copies of their reports, and in December 1877 he was complaining that although he was nominally responsible for all the operations of police throughout the islands of the Western Pacific he was in fact kept in ignorance of what the ships were doing to that end.

In one instance a lieutenant of H.M.S. *Beagle* had gone to the Island of Tanna, in the New Hebrides, and in a more or less irregular manner had hanged a native for his supposed part in an attack on some whites. Gordon com-

plained bitterly of the commission of such "acts of vengeance" at the request or suggestion of British residents in remote groups without previous reference to himself. He might possibly find himself, he said, travelling as a passenger in a warship which had been ordered by his naval superior to act in a manner which he, as governor of the region, might consider both unjust and injudicious.

There was a good deal of correspondence on the subject, but the Government eventually decided that the naval authorities were exclusively responsible for acts of war against native tribes and for determining whether they were requisite; but that where it was practicable without undue delay they should communicate with the High Commissioner before taking action. In practice Gordon was very rarely consulted beforehand, though he almost invariably approved of what was done.<sup>1</sup>

**Lord Kimberley and Queensland.**—In his second term at the Colonial Office (February 1880 to December 1882) Lord Kimberley encountered no more troublesome problem than the police of the Pacific. He was not at all sure that Queensland was whole-hearted in her efforts to check abuses, and Queensland was the only one of the Australian colonies that was actually employing kanaka labour. Nor did he derive much comfort from the despatches of the new governor (Sir A. E. Kennedy), an officer whose experience in combating the slave trade in West Africa and the coolie traffic in China made his opinion most valuable.

"I have never concealed my opinion of the traffic in Polynesian savages," Kennedy wrote (March 1881). "I feel assured that scandals exist which do not reach the public and which are inevitable." He had no sympathy with his government on the question, which he was convinced would sooner or later force itself on the attention of the Imperial Government.

Kimberley especially complained of the lukewarmness of Queensland towards the traffic in arms, though he admitted that the High Commissioner, while taking the same view as the Home Government, felt that it was only expressing "an impotent wish," since they had no power to deal with foreigners. It is not surprising in view of the repeated explanations and objections of the Colonial Secretary for Queensland (Sir A. H. Palmer) that Kimberley got the impression that Queensland was not very sincere in her desire to clean up the traffic.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 3641.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

The state of the islands in 1881 was not a great deal better than in 1871. Outrages continued to be committed by natives and whites in turn, and the vessels of the Australian squadron were constantly employed on punitive duties. On one occasion natives of the Solomon Islands murdered Lieutenant Bower and five men of H.M.S. *Sandfly*. Commodore J. C. Wilson at once despatched the *Emerald* with stern orders "to spare neither time, trouble, nor a legitimate amount of risk" in pursuing the offenders even into the interior of the country to inflict on them severe punishment.

"This is a case," he wrote, "where the prestige of the Navy is deeply concerned, and one by which, if the murders are not severely chastised, its power for good and as a deterrent to crime amongst the islands will receive a great shock."<sup>1</sup> It is evidence of the state of the islands that there were four other cases to be dealt with after that of the *Sandfly*.

**A Survey of the Position.**—Before Gordon left the Pacific he was asked to act with Admiral Sir A. H. Hoskins and Admiral J. C. Wilson as a commission to report on the control of the Western Pacific. The report amounted to an account of his stewardship and was published in 1884.<sup>2</sup> The commissioners came to the conclusion that within its limitations the High Commission had worked well. That is to say, it checked abuses committed by British subjects, largely by the temporary deputy commissions entrusted to the captains of warships. But the punitive sanctions provided were inadequate. The High Commissioner's Court could not inflict fines of more than £10 or imprisonment for more than three months, and it had no power at all of distraining on vessels. Then the powers of the Navy overlapped. There was a good deal to be said for the old practice under which a captain would carry off an offender to Australia for trial, or ship a troublesome settler away to another island. And in native troubles they inflicted the punishment they thought fit. It was a haphazard sort of justice, but on the whole it was singularly just and singularly successful.

The commissioners considered that the office of High Commissioner should be separated from the governorship of Fiji so as to permit the Commissioner to visit all parts of his jurisdiction; and as it seemed likely that the largest gathering of uncontrolled whites would shortly be in New Guinea, they suggested that he should have his headquarters

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1881, lx., No. 284.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 3905.



in some of the adjacent islands. Forcible kidnapping, the report said, had become rare except in the remote groups to which the trade had passed ; but the purchase of recruits by presents to the chiefs was common, and misrepresentation and cajolery were almost universal. There was, too, a good deal of recruiting of women, often for immoral purposes, and a general and deplorable disregard of native authority.

But in spite of all these evils the commissioners, knowing full well that without the commission the old troubles would be worse than ever, and that other powers would eventually have to step in, did not dare to suggest the abandonment of British jurisdiction. On the other hand they urged a strengthening of the High Commission. "The evils of the labour trade are so great," they wrote, "that if we were convinced that it would be impossible to prevent them we should recommend its prohibition."

**Thurston's Courageous Action.**—In the year in which this report appeared Thurston was acting as High Commissioner during the absence from Fiji of Sir G. W. Des Voeux. He well knew that his chief shared his views on the traffic in arms. Des Voeux had, indeed, suggested to Queensland in 1882 that they should jointly prohibit the giving of arms to returning kanakas, but at the moment Queensland was not disposed to acquiesce. A new government came to office in Brisbane which took more seriously the colony's responsibility towards the kanakas, and promptly passed the desired regulation. Victoria and New South Wales at once promulgated it, and Des Voeux, had he been in Fiji at the time, would undoubtedly have followed suit.

Thurston forthwith issued his regulation under the authority of the High Commission, forbidding the traffic in arms and explosives throughout the jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup> In a strongly-worded despatch two months earlier he had urged Lord Derby to take action towards an international agreement, the neglect of which was a "discredit and a disgrace to civilisation." The men in charge of the Pacific trading stations, he said, were mostly British, German, French, or American, and they were "demoralising the natives and bringing about their rapid destruction" by the trade in arms and alcohol.

What the native leaders thought of the traffic may be judged by the fact that on the eve of a new outbreak of civil war in much-vexed Samoa the paramount chief, Malietoa, appealed to the consuls to assist him in preventing

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4273, pp. 30-1 ; C. 5240, pp. 11-12.



the sale of arms. In one small port a search of the stores revealed 600 stand of rifles, 63,000 rounds of ball ammunition, and three tons of gunpowder. Nobody knew the Pacific better than did Thurston, and he felt that the labour trade was so pregnant "with wrongdoing and suffering for all concerned that he doubted whether it could be amended except by complete suppression" (J. B. Thurston to Lord Derby, 27th February 1884).

Derby fully concurred and ventured the opinion to the Foreign Office that France and Germany would probably appreciate the recognition of their position and interests in the Pacific which would be involved in inviting them to co-operate (6th June 1884). So it was that the Crown colony of Fiji led the self-governing colonies in an important measure of philanthropy towards the natives of the islands.

**International Conversations.**—As with the slave trade, the representations of Great Britain to other powers, when they came to be made in 1884, gained much in moral force from the fact that England herself had first made the sacrifice involved. For undoubtedly there was a sacrifice. Every measure of restriction applied to British vessels and employers was a handicap to British interests as compared with those of foreigners. Over and over again British captains and traders, as R. L. Stevenson has remarked, were punished by the High Commissioner's Court on the information and evidence of foreign rivals who could do the same thing with impunity.

Des Voeux, moreover, knew perfectly well what was likely to be the economic effect of his prohibition. Arms were the most coveted of the emoluments which the returning kanaka brought to his home, and the islander who could not hope to get them from the Queensland or Fiji employer would be the more readily persuaded to engage for foreign planters in other groups. In fact, the prohibition would tend to dry up the supply of imported labour for British planters (Des Voeux to Derby, 5th July 1884).

The governments of the United States, France, Germany, Russia, and Austria were all willing enough to participate in conversations. The German Reichstag had as long ago as 1875 debated a bill for the protection of the islanders, and there was at the moment a German commissioner established in the New Britain group. Russia desired the proposed convention to extend to the islands (Aleutian, Commander, and St Lawrence) in the Behring straits and to the coasts of Siberia north of Korea, where much mischief was being

done by arms and alcohol. The fur seals, too, were in danger of extermination from the same cause (Sir E. Thornton to Lord Granville, 9th December 1884). The American Government did not feel disposed to do more than exercise its discretion in permitting the traffic between its own citizens and the islanders.<sup>1</sup>

**Signs of Improvement.**—There was not much tangible result from this correspondence, and for some years the traffic both in arms and alcohol continued in a more or less desultory manner. Improvement came, though, from quite a different quarter.

During 1884 and the succeeding years most of the islands of the Pacific came definitely within the sphere of influence of one or other of the European powers. By the Anglo-German agreement of 1885 a hard and sharp delimitation was made of the New Guinea mainland, the adjacent islands and the Line Islands to the northward and north-east. By the Anglo-French agreement the New Hebrides came under joint control. Britain annexed the Solomons in 1893; the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in 1896-7, and in 1897 the right of Spain to prevent the sale of arms and alcohol in the Sulu archipelago was admitted by Great Britain.

These acts left practically no part of the Pacific outside of the jurisdiction of one or other of the powers, and without exception steps were taken to protect the natives.

**Decline of the Kanaka Traffic.**—Queensland in 1890 stopped the employment of kanakas on the sugar plantations. The policy was temporarily reversed a year or two later owing to a great scarcity of white labour, but only for a limited term of ten years. Sir Samuel Griffith, who was responsible for the reversal, was formerly a strong opponent of imported labour; but in face of the impossibility of finding whites to work the sugar plantations, Queensland was threatened with something of an industrial crisis. The kanakas recruited under the old system were gradually leaving the colony, and there seemed no prospect of filling their places by whites.<sup>2</sup>

It is evidence of the purification of the traffic in the previous decade that its renewal, under careful government supervision, actually had the approval of Bishop Selwyn. He considered that, if care was taken not to deplete the

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 5240.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1892, lvi., No. 6686. On 1st January 1892 there were only 8627 kanakas remaining in Queensland; 464 landed during the year and 315 died there.

islands, the traffic would be of actual benefit to the kanakas. Rear-Admiral Lord Charles Scott also approved, and suggested the establishment of state depots. Nevertheless the news caused much uneasiness in England, and the governor (Sir H. W. Norman) was called upon to explain his reasons for assenting to the bill. His explanation was that it merely proposed a resumption, under the old and new safeguards, of the traffic which was suspended in 1890; that he concurred in the proposal; and that the original Act of 1880, which was much more important, was assented to by the governor of the day without reference to the Colonial Office. Knutsford was quite satisfied with the explanation.

The new attitude on the kanaka traffic adopted by the Home Government is well illustrated by the reply of Lord Ripon to the complaints lodged by the Anti-Slavery Society. Britain had no power, he said, without annexing the islands or declaring a protectorate, to prevent the natives from going abroad to work. That being so, it was much better that they should go to a British colony where both the government and public opinion would look after their interests. And he added:—

“It should be borne in mind that the difficulty of interfering in such a matter is enhanced by the circumstance that an important self-governing colony is affected, and that a large measure of the responsibility in such a matter had been transferred from the Government and Parliament of this country to Her Majesty’s Government and the legislature established by Imperial acts in the colony.”<sup>1</sup>

**Queensland Safeguards for Islanders.** — Meanwhile Queensland had itself gazetted a proclamation forbidding the recruitment of labourers at Santa Cruz, at Tongoa in the New Hebrides, and “at any place or island within the German sphere of influence.”<sup>2</sup> Attention had been called in 1888 to the exceptional mortality in Queensland amongst kanakas from the Santa Cruz group, and in consequence an embargo was placed on their recruitment. Tongoa was also closed in 1890 as the result of a petition from the chief complaining that the island was being depopulated. In a few years both these objections seem to have lost their value. Special dieting arrangements were made for the men from Santa Cruz, and as to Tongoa it was found that, being

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1893, C. 7000.

<sup>2</sup> Proclamation, *Queensland Gazette*, 11th July 1892.

prohibited direct recruitment, the kanakas evaded the prohibition by crossing to other islands and signing on there.<sup>1</sup> Under the circumstances Queensland shortly reopened both islands to the recruiter.

**A One-sided Arrangement.**—The protectorate in the Solomon Islands did not affect the question of recruiting. Rear-Admiral Bowden Smith reported in 1894 that the traffic as carried on there was "the best means of civilising and Christianising the natives." On the other hand, it was not long before the protectorate officials complained of the one-sided arrangement which had been concluded with Germany at the time of the delimitation of spheres, and with France. As a result French and German vessels from New Caledonia and New Britain were actively recruiting kanakas in the British protectorate and trafficking in arms and ammunition, while British vessels were not permitted to recruit in the German or French spheres.<sup>2</sup>

Recruiting in the Gilbert Islands for the Fiji plantations was practically killed in 1895 on the recommendation of Sir John Thurston, whose unexampled knowledge of the Pacific islanders was always a sure guide to the Colonial Office. He admitted that the population was redundant, but the idle life these people had led on calcareous islands foreshadowed a heavy mortality if they were taken to work in Fiji. Recruiting, too, both here and in the Ellice group, seriously militated against the efforts of the British officials to create an efficient administration. On grounds of humanity and expediency alike he opposed the traffic.<sup>3</sup> In face of this strong representation Ripon would only permit a few Gilbert islanders to be taken, for purposes of experiment; and Chamberlain, coming to office a few months later, stopped the traffic entirely.

**The White Australia Laws.**—That the traffic in kanakas for work in Queensland had by this time lost most of its objectionable features was evident from the fact that, when the Commonwealth Parliament in 1901 passed a law abolishing it, more than 3000 kanakas employed in Queensland petitioned that it should be disallowed. Having been domiciled in Australia for some years, they looked with misgiving to being returned to the barbarism of their own islands.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 7912, Memo. of Queensland Chief Secretary, 12th March 1894.

<sup>2</sup> Report of Commissioner C. M. Woodford, on the Solomon Islands, 1897, C. 8457.

<sup>3</sup> Thurston to Ripon, 23rd February 1895: C. 7912.



On the "broad constitutional ground" of allowing a dominion to decide such a matter for itself, Chamberlain refused to advise the disallowance of the bill—it was part of the White Australia policy which he felt himself bound to support—but he was glad of an assurance from the Commonwealth that it would take proper measures to have the repatriated kanakas returned to their own villages.<sup>1</sup>

**Policy in the New Hebrides.**—Following on the complaints of the officials, the British Government in 1906 declined to restrict recruiting in the New Hebrides to service within the group. The position was that as the French and Germans both recruited here for their distant plantations the British resident settlers were at some disadvantage. The Colonial Office took the attitude that if the natives were not allowed to engage for other groups, the resident settlers would obtain a practical monopoly of their labour, and would be freed of all competition. They could not see that the natives should be denied the opportunity of engaging for abroad if they wished. Elgin's final remark is gratuitously sharp:—

"His Majesty's Government feel under no obligation to assist the local planters to secure a supply of labour at rates of wages less than those which may be described as the current rates in the Pacific."<sup>2</sup>

A similar proposal to forbid Solomon islanders recruiting for service beyond the group had already been rejected for the same reason.

The matter was discussed at the Imperial Conference in the following year, and Elgin was converted to the Australian point of view, but the French Government, continually exercised by the need of labour for the adjacent colony of New Caledonia, would not agree to the restriction.<sup>3</sup>

Recruiting for oversea employment amongst the Pacific Islands is now almost a dead letter. The white labour policy of Australia has entirely extinguished the Polynesian kanaka in the Commonwealth and its dependencies; while the plantations of Fiji are worked chiefly by Hindu labour, part of which is imported by indenture and part indigenous, the offspring of earlier immigrants.

<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain to Sir H. C. Chermiside, 8th August 1902: P.P., Cd. 1285.

<sup>2</sup> Elgin to Governor-General of Australia, 16th November 1906: Cd. 3288.

<sup>3</sup> Elgin to High Commissioner for Western Pacific, 7th June 1907: Cd. 3876.



**Position of the High Commission.**—Recent developments have rather diminished than added to the importance of the office of the High Commissioner. Before the extinction of blackbirding and the arms traffic it seemed likely that the post would grow in importance, and Elgin expressed the view as late as 1906 that it would soon have to be separated from the governorship of Fiji.<sup>1</sup>

Since then, however, there has been a new orientation in the Western Pacific. The dominions of Australia and New Zealand have been more insistent in their demand to control the adjacent islands; and they have shown—Australia in Papua, New Zealand in the Cook Islands—that they are to be trusted to administer such offices with efficiency and disinterestedness, and to be faithful stewards of the British responsibility towards black races. Trade connections have also developed considerably.

Yet the great war has laid bare the dangers of permitting the Pacific Islands to remain a scattered array of incoherent and heterogeneous units, ruled by half a dozen different authorities, on more than half a dozen constitutions, and unconnected either by steam communications or by wireless.

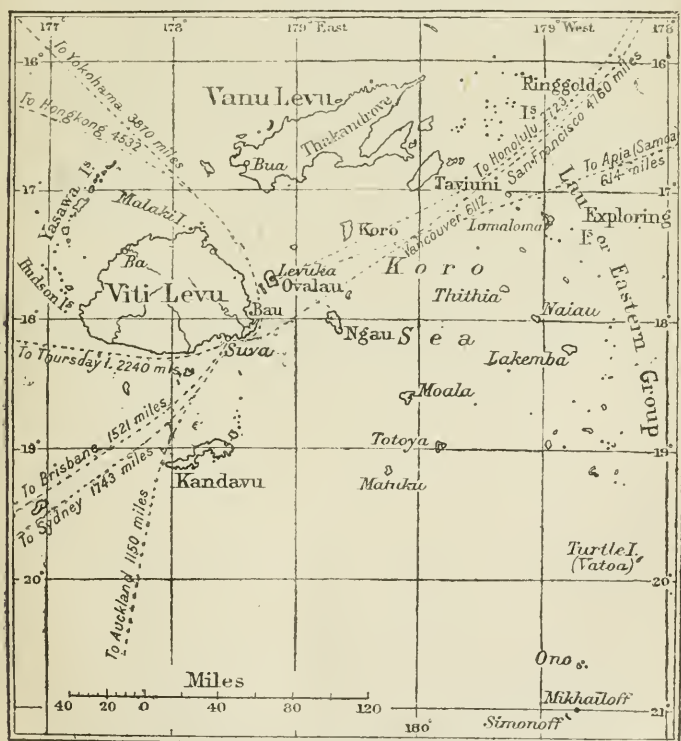
The proposals of the Interstate Commission on Pacific Trade for the future control of our possessions in that region are referred to elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> Elgin to Governor-General of Australia, 16th November 1906: Cd. 3288.

## CHAPTER V

### THE STORY OF FIJI

**A Western Pacific Centre.**—The fact that the early Protestant missionaries entering the Pacific came by way



of Cape Horn gave a prior importance to Tahiti as a centre of influence. The signal success of the missions there increased this importance and tended to perpetuate it long after the centre of gravity had shifted westward.

In point of position, however, the islands of Fiji, centred about 18 deg. S. and 178 deg. E., with their fine harbours and their fertile soil, were the natural axis of Polynesia and also, for some decades at least, of Melanesia. This claim Fiji asserted very soon after the arrival of the Wesleyan missionaries in 1835. When the Australian colonies began to expand, the Fiji Islands were much frequented by whalers and traders, by escaped convicts and by free settlers, and they had become so much a subject of discussion by 1840 that Commodore Wilkes, U.S.N., regarded their proper survey as one of the most important objects of his voyage. Following his visit, too, the United States appointed a vice-consul in the group.

**How Christianity Came.**—The real impetus to Christianity in Fiji came, strangely enough, from the zealous arms of the converted Tongans. Pre-eminent amongst the Polynesians for their warlike qualities, the Tongan immigrants were appealed to by Thakombau to rescue him from his enemies. King George willingly responded, raised the siege, re-established the authority of the so-called "king," and peremptorily urged him to embrace the Christian religion with a proper enthusiasm.

The incursion was quite successful in respect to the propagation of the gospel, which henceforth prospered exceedingly amongst the Fijians. From a purely political point of view it only removed one of Thakombau's dangers to introduce another. Henceforth the overbearing Tongans themselves, under the supreme leadership of Maafu, who ranked as a co-equal chief with Thakombau, were the principal cause of his troubles.

Meanwhile, as regards the outside world, the importance of Fiji steadily grew. Traders, whalers, and planters—English, American, and German—settled on its beaches and frequented its nascent towns. Their interests grew and clashed and menaced those of the natives. Before 1850 annexation by Great Britain was already hinted at as the ultimate and only solution of outstanding problems. But British policy held out stubbornly against the most clamant demands for expansion.

**Mr W. T. Pritchard Appointed Consul.**—In 1857 the Foreign Office nominated to the consulate at Fiji one who had been born and brought up in the Pacific, in just such an atmosphere as that of Fiji. W. T. Pritchard was the son of the missionary-consul and erstwhile dictator who had fought it out so stoutly in Tahiti, first against the advent

of any European government, and afterwards against the French in favour of the British. What he found in Fiji was rather less primitive than the missionary domination which had ruled so long at Tahiti under the semblance of a native sovereignty.

Pritchard had not been long at his new post before he took alarm at the pressure of circumstances which seemed to insist on intervention by some European power. He was so impressed by evidence of aggression by one or another of the great powers that he left his post without permission and went straight to London to instigate the Government to action.

In explanation of this step,<sup>1</sup> he said that the measures adopted by several foreign powers required immediate attention, and with a view to eventualities he had armed himself with a document purporting to be a voluntary cession of the islands by the king. Thakombau's title, he contended, was unquestionable, having been acknowledged by the commanders of British, French, and American warships, while the French and American governments had concluded treaties with him. In point of fact Thakombau appears to have been one of several co-equal district chiefs. The commander of an American warship, in demanding compensation for injuries suffered by American subjects, had assumed him to be the sovereign, in spite of his earnest disclaimers, and from that time he was regarded in Europe as "King of Fiji."

**First Offer of Cession, 1858.**—Pritchard himself made a very strong case for the annexation of Fiji, placing in the forefront of his argument the fact that it lay on the direct route from Australia to Panama, and in foreign hands would menace very seriously the communications of British commerce.

The offer of cession,<sup>2</sup> which was signed by Thakombau as "sovereign chief of Bau and its dependencies, Vunivalu of the armies of Fiji and Tui Viti," etc., set forth that—

"Whereas we, being duly, fully and formally recognised in our aforesaid state, rank and sovereignty by Great Britain, France and the United States of America respectively, and having full and exclusive sovereignty and domain in and over the islands and territories constituting, forming, and being included in the group known as Fiji, or Viti, and being desirous to procure for our people and subjects a good and permanent form of government, whereby they shall enjoy and partake of the benefits, the prosperity and

<sup>1</sup> Pritchard to Colonial Office, 2nd February 1859 : P.P. No. 2995.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1862, No. 2995.

the happiness which it is the duty and the right of all sovereigns to seek and to procure for their people and subjects,"

and being unable to protect them from the violence and oppression and tyranny of foreign powers

"do hereby, for and in consideration of certain conditions, terms and engagements make over, transfer, and convey unto Victoria, by the grace of God, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the full sovereignty and domain in and over our aforesaid islands and territories."<sup>1</sup>

The chief conditions were that Thakombau should retain the title of Tui Viti and should remain at the head of the department of native affairs, though acting always under the guidance and by the advice of the representative of Great Britain: that England should pay the sum of 45,000 dollars in settlement of American claims against Fiji, receiving in return the fee simple of 200,000 acres of land. The cession purported to be made on behalf of the king himself, the chiefs and the people of Fiji, and was dated 12th October 1858. Thakombau signed with his mark in the presence of John S. Fordham (Wesleyan missionary), John Binnie (Wesleyan trainer), Robert S. Swanston (Hawaiian Consul), and William T. Pritchard (H.B.M. Consul). The document was endorsed as being recorded in the archives of the consulate (register No. 6, folio 14).

**Arguments for Annexation.**—Pritchard was not by any means breaking fresh ground at Downing Street. The annexation had already been urged on the Government, on grounds of state, of humanity, and of law and order. The Admiralty had already expressed the opinion that a calling station between Sydney and Panama was indispensable, and that a port of call at Fiji would only add 320 miles to the direct route from Sydney to Panama and 420 miles to that from Sydney to Vancouver.

"I have been much struck," wrote Admiral Washington, the hydrographer, "by the entire want by Great Britain of any advanced position in the Pacific Ocean. The Panama and Sydney mail communication is likely to be established: yet we have no island on which to place a coaling station and where we could ensure fresh supplies. It may hereafter be found very inconvenient that England should be shut out from any station in the Pacific and that an enemy should have possession of Tongatabu, where there is a good harbour within a few hundred miles of the direct track of our homeward-bound gold ships from Sydney and Melbourne.

<sup>1</sup> *A Mission to Viti*, by Berthold Seemann, 1862.



Neither force nor batteries would be necessary to hold the ground: a single cruising ship should suffice for all the wants of the islands. Coral reefs and the hearty goodwill of the natives would do the rest."

The Colonial Office was anxious to know whether the acquisition of Fiji would give England all the available harbours in that part of the Pacific. As to this there was the statement of Captain Loring, R.N., that the common belief in these seas was that they must soon fall into the hands of one of the great powers. The Foreign Office, for its part, was not aware that acceptance of the cession would violate any rights or claims belonging to other powers.

**A Mission of Investigation.**—From the economic point of view the Manchester Cotton Supply Association favoured the acquisition of the group, on the strength of scientific statements that they were suitable for cotton growing—an opinion which was afterwards well borne out. The Legislative Council of New South Wales passed a resolution in favour of annexation, and to remove the financial obstacle a wealthy Australian landowner offered a cheque for the full amount of Thakombau's indebtedness to America.

The Colonial Office, however, was not enamoured of the proposal to extend its responsibilities, and decided to send out a commissioner to investigate the prospects of the country and the liabilities that would be involved in accepting its sovereignty.

**A New Offer of Cession, 1859.**—Meanwhile Pritchard returned to his post somewhat rebuffed for his activity, but no less enthusiastic than before. At the end of 1859 there was still no sign of the Commissioner arriving in Fiji when another council of chiefs "representing all the districts of Fiji" was held. The deed of cession drawn up fourteen months earlier was unanimously ratified and renewed, and the chiefs begged Pritchard to urge its acceptance on the Government.

Thenceforward the council went very fast and very far, and in a few days had practically nominated Pritchard dictator of Fiji, in the sure and certain belief that eventually the queen would accept the cession. In view of his rather cold reception at the Foreign Office, the consul was courting trouble in the rash attitude he took up. His influence over the chiefs, we learn from later visitors, was certainly not less than that of his father over the chiefs of Tahiti. The nondescript white community of Fiji was seething with

intrigue. Pritchard did not hesitate to use his whole influence to promote what he thought to be the interests of Fiji and Great Britain; but he seems to have differed from his official superiors in believing those interests to be identical.

On three successive days in that historic council of December 1859 Pritchard (1) had the deed of cession ratified: (2) secured authority to hold consular courts: (3) had himself appointed head of the native government.<sup>1</sup> "The chiefs of Fiji in council assembled," he wrote to the Foreign Office, "have unanimously and urgently requested me to assume the management of their political and commercial affairs." He was diffident enough to say, however, that he must first consult the Foreign Office.

The "law" appointing the consul to his exalted position provided by Article I. "that all transactions, communications and intercourse of every nature soever between Fiji and all foreign powers shall be conducted solely through and by William Thomas Pritchard, Esquire, H.B.M.'s consul for Fiji." Article II. was even more startling:—

"That we hereby delegate, cede and make over to and vest in the said William Thomas Pritchard the full, unreserved entire and supreme right, authority and power to govern Fiji according to the broad and plain principles of justice and morality, and to make, enact and decree whatever and all laws, regulations and measures he may deem necessary, proper and expedient."

The chiefs were to be a mere advisory council under his presidency, and this system was to remain in force until the offer of cession was finally replied to.

**Consternation in London.**—Something akin to consternation took hold of the officials in London when they heard what had been happening. The Governor of New South Wales (Sir William Denison), had taken alarm when he found Pritchard advertising in the Australian papers to induce settlers to go to Fiji. He feared that if a white population was introduced it must inevitably lead to "a war of races." Like most of the Colonial Office officials, he was greatly impressed by what was then happening in New Zealand, and drew the deduction that as the Fijians were more numerous than the Maori and at the same time more concentrated, the hostilities which he predicted would be by that much the more bloody, and the task of maintaining white supremacy the more difficult.

Denison's alarm was quickly communicated to the

<sup>1</sup> Pritchard to Foreign Office, 31st December 1859: P.P. No. 2995.

Colonial Office, where it was feared that Pritchard might do something which could not be undone.

"It may not be easy to foretell," wrote Sir F. Rogers (afterwards Lord Blachford), "or to prevent the mischief which might ensue from the unauthorised action of H.M. Consul in such a matter."

Pritchard was roundly rebuked for taking steps which "might commit this country to a serious enterprise which he must well know ought to have been sanctioned by his superiors."

**Colonel Smythe's Investigation.**—The wishes of the Colonial Office are not difficult to divine from the tenor of the commission communicated to Colonel W. J. Smythe, R.A. (23rd December 1859):—

"Her Majesty's Government must continue to entrust the propagation of the gospel in the distant parts of the world, as their predecessors have entrusted it, to the piety and zeal of individuals. The hope of the conversion of a people to Christianity, however specious, must not be made a reason for increasing the British dominions. The question, therefore, whether or not the Fijis ought to be added to the numerous colonial possessions of this country must be determined by the same methods of ordinary expediency which direct the general national policy."<sup>1</sup>

Smythe proceeded to Fiji early in 1860. He found there, he said, permanent white settlers to the number of about 200, "composed chiefly of men who have left or run away from vessels visiting the islands. They do nothing to civilise or improve the natives: on the contrary they have in many instances fallen to a lower level. Whenever they can obtain spirits most of them drink to excess."

As for its strategic position, Smythe thought that the possession of Fiji in time of war would be an embarrassment rather than an advantage to the British Empire, which had no need of such a post in the Western Pacific.

**Native Government Suggested.**—The Commissioner thought that in view of the excellent progress that Christianity was making in Fiji, and of the experience of Hawaii and Tahiti, "it would seem that the resources of the Pacific islands can be best developed and the welfare of their inhabitants secured, by a native government aided by the counsels of respectable Europeans." It would not be expedient, he thought, for Her Majesty's Government to accept the offered sovereignty, but for the purpose of

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1862, No. 2995.

improving relations with the natives the consul should be endowed with magisterial powers and jurisdiction over offending British subjects.

Reinforced by the argument of the native war in which England was already engaged in New Zealand, the report of Colonel Smythe appeared to the Secretary of State (the Duke of Newcastle) "to establish conclusively the impolicy of appropriating the Fiji Islands. A large immediate expenditure, a possible native war at an early date, and possible disputes with other civilised countries were the deciding factors."<sup>1</sup>

On Smythe's suggestion it was decided to communicate the decision to the Fijians in such a manner as "to remove any painful feelings caused by the offer being declined." Accordingly, acting under instructions from the Governor of the mother colony (New South Wales), H.M.S. *Miranda* went to Fiji, and on 10th July 1862 Captain R. Jenkins had on board the leading chiefs, and with every mark of consideration and courtesy informed them of the decision of the British Government.

Thus for the time ended the proposed cession of 1858-60. It was a bitter disappointment to the better whites, amongst whom Commodore Seymour had found a general feeling in favour of annexation.

**Charters to the Whites.**—It was soon abundantly clear that the existing conditions could not last, and that some more efficient polity was required for the mixed community of natives and whites. There were many suggestions for a settled form of government, and in the following decade several attempts were made to set up constitutions suitable to the conditions.

In 1865 Thakombau granted a charter to the whites in the island of Ovalau; in 1867 and 1870 to those at Levuka, enabling them to make laws for their own government. Some of his co-equal chiefs did the same—at Bua and Thakandrove. But the most successful of all these experiments was that of the Tongan chief Maafu, in the Lomaloma district. By adopting an excellent code of laws drawn up by Mr Swanston, he gave the whites security for life and property, and in return received a yearly revenue from them. The Lau confederation was a distinct triumph of administration.

What sort of a haphazard community it was that dwelt on the beaches of Fiji is shown by the illuminating reports

<sup>1</sup> Colonial Office to Admiralty, 7th September 1861: P.P. No. 2995.



of the commander of H.M.S. *Rosario* in 1869. The British consul, having no means of carrying out English law, had to rely on "the good sense of the European residents," which naturally did not carry him very far when their own interests were at stake. Landgrabbing and blackbirding were rife, and on some of the plantations gross atrocities were practised on the kanakas. In recent years, though, a number of gentlemen had come to the group with the idea of becoming planters, and the better disposed were becoming numerically strong enough "to make their voices heard in behalf of law and order above those of the usual class of lawless rowdies who congregate in these places where no flag is flying and imagine they can do just as they please with the natives."<sup>1</sup>

Fiji had become the headquarters of the traffic in kanakas, and month by month the position of the consul became increasingly difficult. He referred in his difficulties almost always to the Governor of New South Wales, as the mother colony, because he had been advised to do so by Lord Clarendon. Yet the Colonial Office scouted the idea that New South Wales had more responsibility in regard to the islands than any of the other colonies. It is probably the fact that being the mother colony, being the colony in most intimate touch with the trade of Fiji, and at the same time having no great interest in the kanaka traffic, New South Wales was regarded in England as the most reliable adviser on the subject.<sup>2</sup>

**The Labour Traffic.**—It was the abuses of the kanaka trade that influenced the Colonial Office more than anything in favour of annexing Fiji. Lord Belmore, the Governor of New South Wales, laid stress on the utter impossibility of doing anything to suppress the traffic when the consul at Fiji, the natural centre and rendezvous of the traders, had inadequate powers over British subjects and could not even send offenders for trial in the courts of the nearest colony. There were conflicting interests even in Fiji. While the consul complained of lack of powers of control, the British planters complained that they were not granted recruiting licenses, and their plantations were stagnant for want of labour. They considered it a great hardship that while the British Navy interfered to ruin their prospects purely on account of "a few ruffians," the British Government declined to assume the whole responsibility for the government of

<sup>1</sup> P.P. No. 2995.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 399. Clarendon to March, 3rd August 1869, p. 2: Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 20th January 1870, p. 59.



Fiji.<sup>1</sup> Smarting under this injustice, many of the British planters signed a petition asking the United States to annex the group.

**The State of Fiji.**—The first comprehensive report on Fiji by the new British consul, Edward March, was not nearly so depressing a picture as Lord Belmore and Captain Palmer, R.N., had given the British Government. He found that owing to the improvement in the recent class of immigrants the body of whites bore a good reputation, some having held commissions in the army and navy, some in the colonies as mayor, alderman, magistrates, and railway directors. Planters, tradespeople, squatters, and professional men, "in the absence of any recognised form of government, submit for consular adjudication all the disputes and claims arising amongst themselves. There are a few insolvent absconders and worthless adventurers, but as their antecedents are known they exercise but little influence in the community" (March to Clarendon, 17th December 1869).

Dr Litton Forbes<sup>2</sup> says that before 1871, when there was no recognised government, money was often advanced without security and a man's word was taken as his bond, and "very seldom indeed was the confidence thus reposed wilfully abused." But the great increase in the number of white settlers made this system impracticable and some form of government was absolutely necessary. Among the newcomers were some of the semi-criminal class escaping from the law in Australia, where "Gone to Fiji" bore the same significance in those days as "Gone to Texas" a few years earlier in America.

At the end of 1868 Europeans in Fiji held land computed in area at 235,000 acres; an additional 100,000 acres had been purchased during the year, and Thakombau had made a further large grant to the Melbourne Polynesian Company.

**Satisfaction in Downing Street.**—There was unfeigned pleasure in Downing Street at the rosy picture painted by March. Clarendon said that the state of things was "more hopeful and satisfactory than he had expected." He had suggested previously to some petitioners that they should themselves frame regulations for the control of the labour traffic and invite the assistance of the consul in enforcing them. And he was only too willing to believe that his advice was bearing fruit. In fact, he was so reassured that

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant R. B. Leefe to Lord Belmore, 17th August 1869: C. 399.

<sup>2</sup> *Two Years in Fiji*, 1875.

he eagerly seized the excuse for withholding from March those magisterial powers which all advisers thought he should possess. The recognition extended to him by both white residents and chiefs appeared to be all that was required (Clarendon to March, 30th March 1870).

Before many months were over March was bitterly rueing the pleasant impression he had given. The planters complained of the hardship of his rules for regulating the labour traffic, and when he had had a year's experience he was sadly disillusioned. Constant threats of naval intervention were necessary to maintain the authority of his office, and these were diluted by the fact that for a whole year after his arrival no British ship of war at all visited Fiji. When the *Rosario* arrived he had a deplorable list of complaints to make—of acts of violence on the part of the natives, of the flogging of kanakas, of threats, disrespect and insubordination towards himself in his official capacity, of whites taking a hand in the factional disputes of the natives, of "Bully" Hayes, the notorious pirate, contumaciously sailing away out of his observation instead of waiting to be deported to Sydney for trial. In tearful terms March begged Commodore Stirling (14th October 1870) to "check by admonition or otherwise the proceedings of a certain class of British subjects whose interference in native affairs is likely to create troubles and dissensions."<sup>1</sup>

**Perplexity of the Naval Authorities.**—The commodore was not quite sure how far he should go in actively assisting consuls in the Pacific. The condition of things, according to the report of Captain Challis, R.N., was about as bad as it could be. There were now 2700 whites of all classes scattered about the group and coming into conflict with each other and the natives.

The commodore was glad to feel, at any rate, that in the event of native wars the whites were strong enough to look after themselves. The absence of disturbances showed that they were really well disposed and respectable, and if the consul had "proper authority and power" he could settle himself most of the troubles that were referred to the naval captains (Commodore Stirling to the Admiralty, 30th January 1871).

**Forces for Annexation.**—The forces at work in Fiji could not be stayed. By its position it was becoming a nerve centre of the Pacific. It was a constant source of attraction for enterprising—and not always undesirable—

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 399, p. 188.

young men from Australia, and it was a very strong centre of English influence.

The movement in favour of British sovereignty was irresistible, but the two departments of state put their heads together to withhold all countenance from it. The Colonial Office proposed to admonish the Australian governors that "schemes of this kind should receive no encouragement or authority from H.M. Government," and the Foreign Office strongly exhorted March to abstain from taking any part in internal dissensions, or encouraging the tendency on the part of the settlers to extend their trade into the interior, and to treat the islands in the light of a colonial possession of the British Crown (Clarendon to March, 19th March 1869).<sup>1</sup>

The Polynesian Company was formed at Melbourne in 1868 to take over the unpaid claim of the United States against Fiji, in return for a grant from Thakombau of 200,000 acres of land as proposed in the offer of cession. Thurston at once protested against such a charter being granted, and Commodore Lambert informed the promoters that he considered it improper for British subjects to propose such an agreement to the ruler of a country without the knowledge or sanction of the British consul. Sir John Manners-Sutton, the Governor of Victoria, interposed that he was not aware that any law had been infringed, and that his Government at any rate had no power "to prevent any commercial enterprise, however wild or illusory, which was not at variance with the law." The legal basis of the commodore's veto is not clear, but the same principle will appear later asserted by a much higher constitutional authority, the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific.

**Rumoured American Intervention.**—While things were in this state of chaos advantage was taken by some of the settlers to present the petition to the American vice-consul begging the United States to declare a protectorate over Fiji. Recovering as it was from the civil war, the republic was not in a state to consider schemes of oversea expansion, but the vice-consul received the petition in terms of optimism far beyond his warrant, remarking that he would hail the consummation of the project as the solution most likely to conduce to the moral and material welfare of Fiji.

The threat of American intervention did not disturb the Colonial Office in the least. It informed Lord Clarendon that—the United States proposal notwithstanding—it did

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4222.

not think it advisable for Great Britain to undertake the responsibility of governing the islands.

Then came the official announcement from America that it had no intention whatever of declaring a protectorate.<sup>1</sup> This was only one of many plans discussed by the white settlers. Another was a republic.

**The Charter of 1870.**—Thakombau's charter to the whites to form a municipal government at Levuka was dated 21st November 1870, and was signed as "King of the Bau Dominions." It ran :—

"Whereas it has been represented to me that in consequence of the large number of European settlers at Levuka, which number is rapidly increasing, for the sake of sanitary and other improvements for the public good it would be advisable to confer some special powers on the European community settled at Levuka,"

therefore he authorised them "to elect annually seven house or landholders, by ballot or otherwise, to form a body corporate to frame and pass such by-laws, municipal and other regulations as may be deemed necessary and expedient for the public good, and also to pass, levy, sue for and recover such rates, taxes, and other imposts as may be necessary for carrying on such corporation and any improvements by them deemed advisable." It was distinctly provided that no regulations could be lawful that were "antagonistic or contradictory to the spirit of the present constitution or any future amendments."

This excited further anxiety in Australia and gave a new impetus to the demand for annexation. Whether such a community could have any international standing was doubtful. Sir James Martin, Attorney-General for New South Wales, advised that its right to enforce obedience could not be maintained. "Foreign nations," he said, "would not admit the coercive power of such a government over their subjects, unless there was that amount of fairness, force, and certainty which generally characterise the administration of affairs in civilised communities."

Throughout 1870 Australia was clamouring for annexation, and the historian Dr J. D. Lang led the demand that the colony should take its own measures. The Colonial Office had no difficulty in showing that the definition of boundaries on which he relied had been revoked many years earlier.

**The Colonial Conference.**—In the middle of the year an

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1871, No. 435, p. 20.



intercolonial conference was held at Melbourne. It was resolved unanimously that for geographical reasons, for commercial reasons, and because British subjects were establishing themselves in Fiji, the islands should be annexed.

The reply of the Colonial Office (Kimberley to Governor of Victoria, 16th March 1871) enunciated clearly the policy which was later restated by both Carnarvon and Derby to the confusion of the colonies:—

“It would be impossible for this country to undertake the responsibility of the government of the islands without a sufficient force to support its authority, and Her Majesty’s Government are not prepared to station a military force for this purpose in the Fijis. On these grounds Her Majesty’s Government cannot depart from their former decision. It is not very clear what is intended by the proposal that Her Majesty should extend her protection over the Fijis, but if by this is meant something short of direct annexation it seems to Her Majesty’s Government even more open to objection, as while it would not diminish the responsibility this country would incur, it would weaken and embarrass the exercise of British authority, and would be certain, after a period more or less productive of uncertainty and possible discord, to end in annexation under circumstances less favourable than the present.”<sup>1</sup>

**A Constitutional Argument.**—The protest of New South Wales only induced Kimberley to express his views a little more brusquely:—

“H.M. Government must decline to admit that because a certain number of British subjects, proceeding for the most part from the Australian colonies, having established themselves in the Fijis, the Imperial Government is called upon to extend British sovereignty to these islands in order to relieve such persons and their property from the risk which they may incur. So long as this newly constituted government exercise actual authority you should deal with it as a *de facto* government so far as concerns districts which may acknowledge its rule; but H.M. Government are not prepared to give any opinion as to the propriety of formally recognising it without much fuller information as to its character and prospects.”

Argument on this point lasted for about two years. New South Wales held that as foreign policy was entirely the province of the Imperial Government, a colonial government could not recognise the Government of Fiji until Downing Street had done so (Belmore to Kimberley, with minute of N.S.W. Government, 11th January 1872). The Imperial

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1873, No. 124.



Government insisted on its point, and Alfred Stephens, the Colonial Minister for Lands and Works, remarked rather facetiously of the opposition in Fiji: "It must strike anyone as a strange thing that these gentlemen who were, and are, quite prepared to recognise as valid the surrender to Great Britain by Thakombau and his chiefs of the sovereignty of the Fijian territory, yet deny the capacity or the power of the same king and chiefs to establish a government of their own."

**Thakombau's Ministry.**—According to the commissioners who investigated the matter later, the whites seem not to have known how to go about setting up a government, and they combined with a Mr Woods and a Mr Burt<sup>1</sup> to get Thakombau recognised as king of Fiji, and under his authority to form a ministry consisting of two native chiefs, two principal merchants, Mr Sagar, Mr Woods, and Mr Burt.

The foreign residents of Levuka were assembled in Thakombau's presence, and a speech purporting to be from the throne was read announcing the nomination of the ministry and its intention to govern under a constitution. The principle of the constitution was that the chiefs should continue to govern their own people, while the whites should win the confidence of the world by showing that they were capable of governing themselves.

A parliament was duly elected and sat in 1872 and 1873. It soon developed strong partisan tendencies and killed itself by the celebrated Act of July 1872, under which natives refusing to pay the poll-tax could be sentenced to hard labour on the plantations of the whites. Mr Layard and Commodore Goodenough were of opinion that this Act and the regulation by which prisoners of war also could be hired out to the planters constituted in practice a system of slavery and a violation of the Imperial Kidnapping Act. Things were somewhat improved when Thurston took office in the Ministry, but Woods remained Prime Minister. The commissioners regretted that the consul was not fitted either "by his knowledge of the islands or by a legitimate influence with the chiefs to direct the course of affairs."

**A Consul's Dilemma.**—March was between the devil and the deep sea. In some cases he recognised the *de facto* government; in others, from personal antipathy to its members, he would not. The commodore thought in 1872

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Woods was formerly Colonial Surveyor in New Zealand, and was at the time fixing sites for lighthouses in Fiji. S. Burt, formerly of Sydney, was Thakombau's commercial agent.

that the Government was acting in good faith; that it was absurd not to recognise it when it exercised so much authority; and still worse to impede it by an obstructive policy. Yet this was the course March adopted.

When an ex-postal official claimed against him for salary March declined to plead in a Fijian court, and suffered judgment by default. He was soon complaining of intimidation by planters and night attacks, and had to appeal to the better disposed persons to guard the consulate against the infuriated "owner" of an imported boy who had repaired thither for sanctuary. The Government admitted his right to control the native labour traffic, but when he refused to pass for the plantations some kanakas who had been forcibly kidnapped the Minister for Native Affairs, himself the consignee of the vessel that brought them, passed them in the name of the Fijian Government. When March had committed a supposed blackbinder for trial in Sydney and handed him over to the Government for custody, he was released on his own recognisances and escaped. Refugees were abducted from the consulate premises by Government agents who watched from tree-tops for their chance to pounce. Bit by bit the authority of the consul slipped away from him. Under his nose the Mayor of Levuka "bought" seven natives in direct defiance of the consular regulations which had been sanctioned by Downing Street and by practice. When he detained the schooner *Nukulau* on suspicion of blackbirding she put him out of court by becoming a Fijian craft in the course of a single night. The sudden assumption of the same nationality by 2000 erstwhile British subjects greatly disconcerted the consul.

All these troubles, which are faithfully recorded in March's despatches to Lord Granville and in the letters of the commodore, were looked into by the latter on the spot. Captain Douglas, R.N., secured an apology from the Fijian Government, and, contrary to his personal convictions, obtained for him personal immunity for arrest, "because I deemed it would be eminently prejudicial to British interests and to the respect H.M.'s subjects should entertain for their consul were I to allow him to be arrested."

But what was to be expected of March? He was unduly touchy and sensitive, and had no faculty for co-operation. He told Granville in February 1872 that the members of the Government were men of no account, and were actuated by personal motives rather than the public good, that "its authority has no solid foundation and will most probably

end in social dislocation and turbulence." It was a great shock to him to hear that Granville had decided to acknowledge the *de facto* government, and he never conformed to the change.

**Elements of Disruption.**—The planters of Fiji have had many champions and detractors. The evidence goes to show that on the whole they treated their kanakas well and humanely, and the regulations for their protection were largely prompted by the planters themselves. To speak of them as slave owners, says Dr Litton Forbes, is a cruel injustice. "On the opening day of the first parliament the Constitution Act was read aloud. One paragraph in it enacted that no man could be a slave on Fijian soil. Anyone who heard the ringing cheer with which the house, composed mostly of planters, greeted this statement will not readily believe that such men are either slave dealers or slave owners."<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless the constitution inaugurated by Thakombau in June 1871 went too far. And it contained two elements of failure. In the first place it arrogated for Thakombau, who was only one of several equal territorial chiefs, the title of "king" and the prerogative of legislating for the whole group. Secondly, it proposed to govern whites as well as natives, which was palpably impossible except by consent of the whites. The fact that Thakombau was a mere figurehead, and that his government was composed almost entirely of whites, did not rob the proposal of any of its impropriety.

**Resistance by Whites.**—As early as March 1872, long before the obnoxious Poll-tax Act was passed, the British Subjects Mutual Protection Society and the Volunteer Corps were in existence at Levuka as a direct counterblast to the *de facto* government. At this time Captain J. Moresby, R.N., and Lord Normanby, the Governor of New South Wales, were referring to "the friendly government" of Fiji, and the sheriff of the Fijian courts was "courteously complying" with the demand of a British captain to surrender the person of a blackbirder who had been arrested by the "friendly government."

In March 1873, when the Government sent troops to punish a native murderer of a white family in the Ba district, H.M.S. *Dido* sailed to the spot to prevent a rupture between the troops and the white planters. Thakombau's charter clearly did not provide the requisite sanction for

<sup>1</sup> *Two Years in Fiji*, by Dr L. Forbes, 1875.

governing the country. The Cabinet was soon governing independent of Parliament, and in August 1873, foreseeing the inevitable collapse of the experiment, Kimberley commissioned Commodore J. Goodenough, R.N., and Mr Edgar L. Layard, the new consul for Fiji and Tonga, to make a report on the position.

**The Goodenough Commission.**—The report of the commissioners,<sup>1</sup> signed on H.M.S. *Pearl* at Levuka in April 1874, showed that four courses were open to the British Government. It might follow the advice it had received over and over again and confer magisterial powers on the consul. It might recognise the existing government. It might establish a British protectorate. It might assume complete sovereignty.

The Colonial Office itself had expressed a preference for a protectorate, but this the commissioners dismissed at once owing to the strong objections of the British residents. A native government which would be tolerable to natives and whites alike was impossible, since there was no paramount chief as in Tonga or Hawaii. The aggrandisement of the consul's office, although possible, would really amount to a protectorate of an undefined and inconvenient character. Believing that they had seen responsible government at work, neither whites nor natives wanted it, and the commissioners had no hesitation in saying that what the majority did want was Colonial Office government as a Crown colony. This would defend the interests of the natives against pressure by the whites, and would get over the difficulty arising from the disinclination of the busy planters to devote their time to parliamentary work.

Finally it was suggested—and here we have the genesis of the High Commission of the Western Pacific—that the Governor of Fiji should have jurisdiction over the persons and acts of British subjects in the New Hebrides and the Solomon Islands, or all the Western Pacific islands not under French sovereignty, and should control the labour traffic.

“We beg to assure your Lordship,” the report ended, “that we can see no prospect for these islands should Her Majesty's Government decline to accept the offer of cession but ruin to the English planters and confusion in the native government. As a Crown colony we think Fiji would certainly become a prosperous settlement.”

If Thakombau should die there would be a struggle for

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 1011.



power, the commissioners thought, which the whites could not bring to a peaceful issue without the intervention of a man-of-war. Privately Commodore Goodenough said he looked upon annexation as a positive duty. England had interfered so much in Fijian affairs that the natives looked to her for support, and if it were withheld there would be a collapse of government, repudiation of debt, and ruin to many industrious people. From the political point of view Fiji would be a most valuable central station in Polynesia—undoubtedly the best position that could be found.<sup>1</sup>

**The Sovereignty Accepted.**—To the report was attached a new offer of cession drawn up on the advice of Thurston, and dated 21st March 1874. The unequivocal nature of the recommendations did not at all commend itself to Carnarvon, but within three months of the day on which it was signed the Government had decided to act on it. Carnarvon makes it clear that he would have welcomed some loophole of escape, and the Government very properly held it right to decline accepting on the conditions which were attached to Thakombau's offer. But he recommended the Queen to accept the sovereignty without conditions, the chiefs trusting to the generosity and justice of the British Government.<sup>2</sup>

Carnarvon complained that the commissioners had gone "beyond what had been expected of them in expressing themselves strongly in favour of annexation," and for that reason the Government desired to place any further action in the hands of the Governor of New South Wales, "as not being committed to any view and so able to act firmly and independently." He was ordered to proceed to Fiji with sole authority to act (Carnarvon to Sir H. M. Robinson, 15th July 1874).<sup>2</sup>

**The Sovereignty Proclaimed.**—In the event the British flag was hoisted in Fiji within six months of the day on which the report was signed on H.M.S. *Pearl*. For two days Thakombau and his chiefs considered in council at Levuka what Sir Hercules Robinson had to say, and on 28th September they informed him that they had decided "to give Fiji unreservedly to the Queen of Britain that she may rule us justly and affectionately, and that we may live in peace and prosperity." Two days later the deed of cession was signed at Nasova. Recognising that Thakombau was only one of several chiefs and not a sovereign, Sir Hercules interviewed the others in their respective districts, and

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Commodore J. G. Goodenough, R.N.*, 1878.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 1114.



finally, when all had signified their adhesion to the deed, British sovereignty was proclaimed on 10th October 1874.

Robinson assumed the provisional governorship and appointed Layard vice-president of his executive council. A few days later he issued a proclamation adopting the Queensland Act, 31 Vict., No. 47, as the law of Fiji on Polynesian labour. The limits of the proclamation of the colony were 15 deg. S. to 22 deg. S., and 177 deg. W. to 175 deg. E., thus including the whole of the Fiji group proper, with the Turtle Islands, Simonoff, Mikhailoff, and Ono to the south-east.

**The Crown Colony.**—Sir Arthur Gordon (afterwards Lord Stanmore) was appointed first Governor of Fiji, and his administration, particularly of native affairs, was distinctly successful. Adopting the spirit of the offer of cession, he deferred to the opinion of Thakombau in native affairs and as far as possible governed through the existing tribal machinery.

The Colonial Office was not at all pleased with the understanding Robinson arrived at with the 'king' as regards his civil list, and Carnarvon asked Gordon to consider seriously whether the proposed allowances could not be reduced. Gordon took the very proper view that the subject could not be reopened "without a most distinct moral breach of faith, if not a formal and technical one."

This was not the last of Carnarvon's endeavours to save money on the establishments of the new colony. Shortly afterwards he withdrew the mail subsidy, and Gordon found himself cut off altogether from the outside world—another graceless act which showed how grudgingly the sovereignty had been assumed. There was an unedifying correspondence before the calling of the mail steamers from the American ports to Australia and New Zealand was resumed.

Gordon's success was so marked that when it was proposed to transfer him as governor to the more important post in New Zealand, the Colonial Office intended to retain him to administer the native affairs of Fiji and also as High Commissioner. His successor (Sir G. W. Des Vœux) strongly objected to a step which would make him merely a lieutenant-governor, subject to the veto of a senior stationed 2000 miles distant, and eventually he was appointed full governor and deputy to the High Commissioner.

**The Search for Labour.**—The labour difficulties which had troubled the planters before the annexation were even more intense under the new régime. The supply from the

islands of the Western Pacific had fallen off, partly owing to the rapid diminution of the population, and partly to delays in returning time-expired kanakas; and Gordon demanded that Fiji should be permitted to follow the example of Mauritius and the West Indies and introduce coolies from India.

Carnarvon readily approved, and the system was inaugurated in May 1879 which has continued almost without interruption since. Native Fijians being very much averse to labour, the sugar industry must have perished but for the importation of Hindu coolies, who have formed a new and most important element in the economy of the colony. The following table is expressive:—

		Fijians	Hindus
1881	. . .	114,748	588
1911	. . .	87,096	40,286

Though the climate is healthy for the tropics, the European population has increased very slowly. The Hindus are the only element of the population that has made a robust expansion. At the date of the annexation the chief items of export were copra, cotton, and maize. Cotton fell away from 1882 and to-day is practically unknown amongst the exports, but the export of sugar, copra, and fruit has increased enormously.

Fiji is one of the most prosperous of the Crown colonies. The regular demand in Australia and New Zealand for the cane sugar of the group, and its position on the steam lanes between America and Australasia brought an excellent service of steamers in all directions, and the Pacific cable, with more recent wireless stations, has supplemented the communications.

**The System of Government.**—Fiji is the single example in the Pacific of semi-representative Crown colony government. The executive consist of six official and two unofficial members: and the Legislative Council of ten official members and six elected members, as well as two natives. Education is free and is encouraged, but like other Pacific Islands Fiji shows a baneful example of an idle native race.

An agitation for fuller representation on behalf of both whites and natives came to a head in 1900. The Fiji Federal League, the main organ of the agitation, demanded confederation with New Zealand. The movement was always of rather doubtful origin, but it undoubtedly had some inspiration in the jealousies of Australia and New

Zealand regarding the Pacific Islands. The grievances of the whites were precisely the same as were represented to the Intercolonial Convention at Sydney fifteen years earlier.<sup>1</sup> Proposals to absorb certain of the groups were being widely discussed in New Zealand, and they were referred to before the Royal Commission on Federation in that colony, which reported in May 1901.<sup>2</sup> In the session of 1900 the New Zealand House of Representatives passed a formal resolution for submission to the Crown, praying that Fiji be relieved of the disabilities of a Crown colony and incorporated with New Zealand.

For some months a battle royal was waged across the waters of the Pacific. The Governor of Fiji (Sir G. T. M. O'Brien) stepped down into the arena in defence of existing conditions, and incurred a severe rap over the knuckles from Chamberlain for his criticisms of native policy in New Zealand.<sup>3</sup> In June 1901 he adopted the unhappy expedient, to quash the agitation at the Fiji end, of passing a "peace and good order" ordinance, threatening with imprisonment any person who should attempt to induce any Fijian to try to subvert the existing form of government. Again he fell foul of the Colonial Office and was ordered to revoke the ordinance. Soon afterwards O'Brien was recalled.

After his departure the question died down, and it seems almost to have been forgotten by the time the Colonial Conference met in 1902. When he was on the point of leaving London Seddon wrote to Chamberlain drawing his attention to the fact that the resolutions of the New Zealand Parliament had not been replied to. The matter of giving better representations to Europeans was then referred to the new governor (Sir H. Jackson),<sup>4</sup> and a concession was made to the whites a few months later.

**Fiji To-day.**—The islands to the eastward and south-eastward of Fiji having been absorbed into other systems—into French possessions or the enlarged boundaries of New Zealand—Fiji no longer occupies the central position she

<sup>1</sup> P.P. N.Z. 1900, A36.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1901, A4.

<sup>3</sup> Speaking at the opening of the Wainibokasi Hospital, the governor said to a gathering largely composed of natives: "It has always been the same in every country under the kind of government that there is in New Zealand—the white men have always taken the land from the coloured owners. It has been so in New Zealand, where the land once all belonged to the coloured people. Who owns that land now? The white people have got nearly the whole of it." P.P. N.Z. 1901, A3a.

<sup>4</sup> P.P. N.Z. 1903, A1, A2.

formerly held as regards the Western Pacific. The centre of gravity has moved westward. Consequently it is unlikely that the headquarters of the High Commissioner, who nominally governs the British Line Islands and the Solomons, and is head of the British side of the New Hebrides condominium, will remain there. The commercial position of Fiji is, however, well assured.

**A Quaint Outlier.**—Rotuma (12 deg. 30' S., 177 deg. 10' E.) is a strange example of a savage offshoot from the Polynesian navigators of old. The Rotumans are Polynesians with marked Japanese characteristics. Having given hospitality to the apostles of two religions, they were periodically afflicted by religious wars. The opposing sides, says Romilly, were always on guard against each other: all amusements had been stopped. The place was so dull that all the young men were leaving.<sup>1</sup> There was no hope for these remote islanders until Queen Victoria, after more than a year's consideration, agreed to annex the place.

The annexation took place in 1881, and Rotuma became an appendage of Fiji. But owing to its distance it was given a separate government under a commissioner, whose court takes the place of the supreme court of Fiji. Rotuma has a population of more than 2000, and its chief export is copra.

**Sir John Thurston.**—John Bates Thurston was born in England in 1836, and after serving as an officer on an Indian liner he became a farmer at Namoi, New South Wales. In 1862 he was employed for a time under the government of that colony, and then went on a botanising expedition in the Western Pacific. In 1864 he was wrecked on one of the islands of Samoa, and before being rescued in 1866 he had acquired a wide knowledge of the native language and customs. On being taken to Fiji he obtained a post in the British consulate, and in 1869 he was for a while acting consul. "Shortly afterwards his remarkable influence with the natives became manifest. Fiji had one of those quaint imitations of a parliamentary constitution which are still found in some of the Pacific Islands. Such a constitution is not always a success, and in 1872 that of Fiji went to pieces. In May 1872 the king (Thakombau) saw that there was only one chance of safety, and called in Thurston to be Chief Secretary and Minister for Foreign Affairs. This led immediately in 1874 to the transfer of the islands to Great Britain, which had only a few years previously refused to

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Memoirs of H. H. Romilly*, 1893.



accept them. The negotiations were conducted through Thurston, and on the accomplishment of the cession he became Colonial Secretary and Auditor-General of the new Crown colony." In 1877 the High Commission for the Western Pacific was created, and in 1879 Thurston became secretary to the High Commissioner. The following year he was Acting-Governor of Fiji, and at the end of the year went on a special mission to the Friendly Islands to negotiate a treaty. In 1882 he was appointed Deputy Governor of Fiji, and in November 1883 Consul-General for the Western Pacific. "He established his reputation both with the natives and the Europeans by the judgment and wisdom with which he treated the former, and the firmness with which he upheld the dignity of British jurisdiction. So great was his reputation with the natives that in 1883, when the great Fijian chief was dying, he installed Thurston as chief of all the Fijians." In 1885 he went to England as British Commissioner to the Anglo-German Commission, and the following year returned to Fiji in the capacity of lieutenant-governor. In 1886 he became Governor and High Commissioner of the Western Pacific. In 1895 he visited England in broken health, and, returning to Fiji in 1896, died the following year (*Dict. Nat. Biography*).



## CHAPTER VI

### GERMANY IN THE PACIFIC

**John Cæsar Godeffroy, of Hamburg.**—It seems quite clear that the German interests in the Pacific, which dragged Bismarck into a colonial policy and eventually into conflict with Great Britain, were those which grew out of the small beginnings of John Cæsar Godeffroy, a well-known merchant and ship-owner of Hamburg.

Just when Godeffroy first appeared in the Pacific is uncertain. He had carried out a contract with the British Government in the fifties for the transport of German emigrants, reservists of the legions who served in the Crimean War, to the Cape of Good Hope. Early in the succeeding decade he took some out to Queensland. It was certainly no later than this that he acquired trading interests in the Pacific Islands. Zimmermann,<sup>1</sup> who is exceptionally well informed, says that Godeffroy's first station in Samoa was established in 1865, but the Interstate Commission of Australia (1918) places it at 1857. It is not material.

**Germans in New Zealand.**—In the French expedition which set forth in 1839 to establish itself at Akaroa, New Zealand, were half a dozen Germans, who with some whalers already established there, were soon absorbed in the British population of the new colony. In the following year the New Zealand Company, believing it had a valid title to lands as far afield as the Chathams, proposed to sell them to "certain persons officially connected with Hamburg and the other free cities of Germany, acting on behalf of a colonisation company forming in that country." The directors congratulated themselves on having got into touch with "the representatives of communities so little likely to be animated at any time by political hostility to Great Britain

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte der Deutschen Kolonialpolitik*, by Dr Alfred Zimmermann, Berlin, 1914.

as the free cities of Germany." They proposed, moreover, to covenant that no penal settlement should be established, and that in the trade of the Chathams British subjects and shipping should be on an equality with those of the Hanse towns. Unfortunately for the company the Attorney-General of Great Britain decided that its charter gave it no authority to deal with the Chathams; and the proposal fell through.<sup>1</sup>

About the same time a branch of the New Zealand Company was founded in Hamburg, and the North German Mission Society was prompted to send four young missionaries of the Lutheran Church to New Zealand as pastors to a body of 140 German emigrants who settled in the neighbourhood of Nelson in 1843. In the following year the colony was reinforced by forty-three families from Mecklenburg, and in a few years there were 350 Germans, with two national churches, at Moutere and Waimea East. A number of Germans afterwards went to the Chathams, where in 1867 one-fifth of the white population were Germans.

During the governorship of Sir George Grey in South Australia (1841-5) a considerable number of Germans were introduced as settlers by Godeffroy & Son, in consequence of the failure of the promoters to recruit sufficient colonists in England.

Moresby in 1872 found that almost all the white men in Gilbert and Ellice were the agents of Weber & Co., of Samoa, an allied firm. In the Mitchell Islands a German trader had established himself in 1857. At Arrowsmith and Ebon, amongst the Line Islands, Godeffroy had had stations in the sixties. He had previously had three *bêche-de-mer* stations in the Carolines, but had temporarily abandoned them. At Kittie harbour, Ponape, in the Carolines, H.M.S. *Blanche* found him well established in 1872. The same authority says that he had been in the South Seas some years before 1860 establishing a direct trade with Hamburg.

**Other Pacific Interests.**—At least a quarter of a century before Godeffroy Prussian whalers were quite prominent in the North Pacific. In 1831 they were well known to the Hawaiians, and in that year Captain Wendt, of the North German whaler *Princess Louisa*, took presents to Kamehameha III. from the King of Prussia. Early in 1854 the British consul at Hawaii received an interesting report from Hoffschlagen and Stapenhorst on whaling in the sub-arctic. Their captain had just returned to Europe for new apparatus.

<sup>1</sup> "The Making of a Nation," by G. H. Scholefield, in the *New Zealand Times*, 13th March 1907.



**Establishments in New Britain.**—The Australasian Board of Missions decided in 1874 to commence work in the New Britain archipelago east of New Guinea, and selected the Rev. George Brown, one of the best known of Pacific missionaries, to settle in New Britain or New Ireland.

Captain Carteret, in H.M.S. *Swallow*, took possession of New Britain at English Cove in 1767. In the following year Bougainville, anchoring in the same bay, discovered vestiges of his English predecessors. Thereafter several French navigators visited the group—an intercourse which possibly accounts for the selection of this site by the unhappy expedition of the Marquis de Ray. In the seventies an English trader or two and the German firm attempted to station themselves, but were driven away by the ferocity of the natives.

Brown chose as his headquarters the small island of Matupi, in Blanche Bay, where the Godeffroy agents had attempted to settle in 1874. The first Christian church, the outcome of his devoted tenacity, was opened in 1876, and soon became a strong centre of English influence and Christianity. In 1880 there were twenty-nine mission stations in New Britain, New Ireland, and the Duke of York group, and the mission was “doing unmixed good wherever its influence was felt” (Lieutenant Houghton, of H.M.S. *Beagle*).

**German Cruiser at New Britain, 1877.**—In August 1877 Brown found that the German firm had two English traders acting as their agents at Kabakada, in New Britain, and a German cruiser had been making a survey of Blanche Bay.<sup>1</sup>

In the following year the treacherous murder of one of his native catechists led Brown into an expedition which was much criticised in subsequent years. After consulting with the whites on Duke of York Island, it was decided that the only security for the whites in the future lay in a rigorous punishment of the tribe responsible for the murder. A comprehensive punitive expedition was organised, and as a consequence more than a hundred natives were killed, and the huts of the guilty villages were burned to the ground. Brown’s action was fully approved by the commanders of H.M.S. *Sandfly* and the German corvette *Ariadne*, and also by the German consul at Samoa.

The assumption of jurisdiction by Captain von Werner at this date (14th December 1878) is of historical interest. He inflicted fines and administered warnings to the offending

<sup>1</sup> *George Brown, D.D.: An Autobiography*, 1908.



natives, and he wrote officially thanking the courageous English missionary for his conduct, which had "materially benefited German interests."

Von Werner took special pains to defend Brown against criticism in Australia and the displeasure of the High Commission, both of which naturally followed. He also requested his own government to transmit a letter of commendation to the British Government, remarking that what he had done benefited "German interests principally, as, so far, only Germany has got commercial interests here, even if many of the trading agents in German employ are English subjects."

Late in 1879, when Mr Brown was visiting Fiji, he was served by the High Commissioner's Court with a writ charging him with manslaughter. But the circumstances had been inquired into by H.M.S. *Danae*, and when the case was called on the charge was withdrawn, on the strength of the captain's report. The work of the Rev. George Brown forms a bright and heroic page in the story of the Pacific missions.

**Godeffroy & Son Collapse.**—By the end of the seventies the firm of Godeffroy & Son was involved in heavy financial liabilities, and a new company was floated in Hamburg to take over and develop the assets. This is the proposal to which Sir Julius Vogel, then Agent-General for New Zealand, refers on 27th January 1880 as the subject of a proclamation by the Imperial Chancellor earlier in the same month.

The company was to be called the Deutsche See Handels Gesellschaft, and was to have a capital of 8,000,000 marks. Vogel remarks that this was largely in excess of the sum required to work the assets of Godeffroy & Son, and that obviously the real objects of the company were of a much more ambitious character. Bismarck proposed to guarantee a minimum dividend to the shareholders. Vogel had himself a few years earlier proposed that British interests in the Pacific should be developed through a chartered company from New Zealand, and he insisted that Great Britain could not afford to remain indifferent to the new German movement.<sup>1</sup>

**A German Narrative.**—Zimmermann says that the interests of the two German firms—Godeffroys and Robertson & Hernsheim—had suffered a good deal in the seventies by the operations of Australian and English labour recruiters, and that it was for this reason that a German

<sup>1</sup> P.P. N.Z. 1880, A8.



warship was sent to the station and a consul-general appointed at Samoa. Anticipating help from the Imperial Government, the new company projected a settlement on the north coast of New Guinea. But Bismarck was discouraged by the failure of the Samoa bill of 1880 and hesitated to make any advance.

The principal influence urging Bismarck to action in the Pacific was that of Geheimrat von Hanseemann, a wealthy banker, who was in close touch with Dr Finsch, a celebrated German traveller. In November 1882 appeared the Kolonialverein, openly demanding the acquisition of New Guinea and painting in glowing colours the future of German enterprise in the Pacific. The movement, Zimmermann says, created less stir in Germany than in Australia, where it led directly to Queensland's abortive act of annexation.

When the resolutions of the Sydney Convention of December reached Europe the two German firms moved the Chancellor to take action without delay and to grant Imperial protection to acquired German interests. A warship had already been sent to New Britain, Bismarck replied, and a consular officer to Matupi, and he looked to the companies to make the next move. But the companies had their own rivalries and differences, and could not come to any understanding as to the terms on which they should co-operate in New Guinea. In the end, through the medium of Barings, in London, von Hanseemann arranged an amalgamation of interests.

**The "Flaggenhissung."**—Dr Finsch was at once despatched to Sydney with a ship captain named Dallmann and a picked crew, and they betook themselves to New Guinea and New Britain, under the guise of a scientific expedition ("unter dem Vorwand wissenschaftlicher Forschungen"), to seek out and acquire the best harbours. The new company, the Deutsche Handels und Plantagen Gesellschaft, established factories ashore. At the same time the Neu-Guinea Kompagnie was founded, on 26th May 1884, under Prussian law. All this, says Zimmermann, was carried out in the greatest secrecy ("Das alles vollzog sich in tiefstem Geheimnis").

The story proceeds until August 1884, when the conversations between Granville and Munster took place.<sup>1</sup> On the 12th of that month Gladstone announced in the House of Commons the boundaries of the proposed British protectorate in New Guinea, which were to exclude the northern part of the island and the islands to the north and east.

<sup>1</sup> See the chapters on New Guinea.

On the strength of this statement the Chancellor on 19th August instructed the consul-general in Sydney by telegraph to inform the commissioner in New Britain that it was intended to hoist the German flag wherever German undertakings were already in existence or were projected, either in New Britain or on the north coast of New Guinea. On the very next day von Hanseemann and his co-banker von Bleichroder were informed that their undertaking would be duly regularised and recognised in the same form as the Hanseatische Unternehmen in South Africa.

Dr Finsch left Sydney in the *Samoa* on 11th September for Meoko in New Britain. That the nature of his undertaking was suspected by the Government of New South Wales is proved by telegrams which were sent by the Governor to the Colonial Office reporting his departure. Early in October, continues Zimmermann, he "betook himself to the north coast of New Guinea, and first of all in Port Constantine and then in other places opened friendly relations and acquired land of the natives." Arriving at the end of October back at Matupi, he found there the warships *Elisabeth* and *Hyäne*, and they returned together and hoisted the flag at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, Finschhafen, and Huon Gulf. In December Finsch again visited the coast of New Guinea, and the flag was hoisted at New Britain.

**Aggression in the Eighties.**—Having come off so well in her diplomatic tussle with England, Germany came to an agreement with France at the end of 1885. With great prescience the German negotiators in all cases insisted on Germany retaining the right to recruit kanaka labour outside her own sphere, while she did not allow reciprocal rights to the other party. This was a feature of the Anglo-German agreement, and of the cession of the northern Solomon Islands to England under the agreement of 1899. It was also provided for in the French understanding of 1885. Yet the Interstate Commission of Australia has shown that the supply of native labour in the German possessions far exceeded that in the spheres of the other powers.

In the Franco-German agreement Germany renounced all claims in Tahiti, the Leeward Islands, and the New Hebrides, receiving in return the recruiting rights.

In 1885, too, the Kaiser's warships forced the issue with Spain by hoisting the flag at Yap, in the Caroline Islands. Feeling ran high, but the matter was eventually submitted to the arbitration of the Pope, and the sovereignty was awarded to Spain. Complete freedom of trade was granted

to Germany, and her penetration prepared the way for purchasing most of the desired islands at the end of the century.

**Anglo-German Spheres.**—The disputes of 1884 were finally settled by the declaration signed at Berlin by Sir Edward Malet and Count Herbert Bismarck in April 1886. The area dealt with extended from 15 deg. N. to 30 deg. S. latitude, and from 165 deg. W. to 130 deg. E. longitude.

Germany to the south and east of the conventional line, England to the north and west, each party agreed not to acquire territory, accept protectorates, or interfere with the influence of the other, and to give up interests already acquired. Article VI. excludes from the declaration "the Navigator Islands (Samoa), which are affected by treaties with Great Britain, Germany, and the United States, the Friendly Islands (Tonga), which are affected by treaties with Great Britain and Germany, and the Island of Niue, which were to form a neutral region, and all places in the Western Pacific under the sovereignty or protection of any civilised power other than Great Britain or Germany."<sup>1</sup>

**Development of German Interests.**—The increase and expansion of the trading interests of Germany in the Pacific became the affair not only of the companies concerned but also of the German Government and the shipping companies. In 1884, when Baron von Hübner was in the Pacific, the trading companies were particularly active, and German interests were undoubtedly then second only to those of England. Germany alone, by lines of fast sailing ships, had direct communication with Europe. On the other hand British trade was done chiefly through the British colonies of Australia and New Zealand, and Hübner admitted that "the goods and provisions which were imported came, as a rule, from England or America."

The Germans generally sent to their trading stations a superior class of young men, often well educated. They went out as clerks and eventually were appointed to have charge of the stations. Nearly all of them, Romilly says,<sup>2</sup> could speak French and English as well as German, which gave them a great advantage in the trade of the Western Pacific.<sup>3</sup>

**The Shipping Dispute, 1905.**—Zimmermann says that the Jaluit Company not merely prospered but actually paid the expenses of the administration out of its income. In

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4656.

<sup>2</sup> *The Western Pacific and New Guinea*, 1887.

<sup>3</sup> For the distribution of trade in the Pacific, see table at p. 300.

1900, with the help of a mail subsidy, it established its own steamship line to Sydney, and the following year, in consideration of an annual mail subsidy of 120,000 M., it connected the whole archipelago north of the equator with Hongkong, thus providing alternative connections for merchandise from the German Pacific Islands to Europe.

This energetic shipping policy produced a clash of interests with a British firm, and eventually led to the revocation of the German company's exceptional privileges. In 1904 the Sydney firm of Burns, Philp & Co., with a view to establishing a British connection between the German groups north of the line and Australia, obtained the assurance of the German consulate in Sydney that it would receive equal treatment with the German lines. The service commenced in 1904, the main object being to link up Gilbert and Ellice. But the first act of the German administration, when the company's steamer called at Marshall for copra, was to levy what Zimmermann describes as "a very high license fee." At first it was 4500 M., and after two voyages 9000 M. per month, with an additional 1000 M. per sailing, while an export duty of 30 M. per ton was charged on copra. At the Carolines the captain was told that the German company possessed a monopoly of the trade.

This position, of course, neither the Australian Government nor the British would accept; and a strong protest was made to Berlin against the violation of the equal trading clauses of the agreement of 1886. Germany's policy, said Lord Jersey in the House of Lords on 20th March 1905, was directed "towards the one object of ousting British trade from the Pacific." Lord Lansdowne explained that as a trading company the Jaluit Company was liable to pay the same duties as other traders, but it had a dual capacity, and as the government of the region it used the proceeds to assist its own revenue. The Carolines were purchased by Germany subsequent to the signing of the agreement, but they lay within the area comprised in the agreement and were plainly subject to it.

On 11th May Lansdowne was able to announce that the German Government, while claiming its right to make such arrangements as it wished for the government of its own colonies, admitted that the treatment of the Australian company constituted a breach of the agreement, and stated its intention of terminating the arrangement with the Jaluit Company. Accordingly on 31st March 1906 the German



Government took over itself the administration of the Marshalls.<sup>1</sup>

Recounting the negotiations, Zimmermann says that the mail subsidies given by Australia to Burns, Philp & Co., were themselves a breach of the treaty prejudicial to German trade. Though the duties in the islands were reduced, "this produced no effect upon the Australians, and at the end of the year they had their minds firmly fixed upon reprisals against Germany. Under these circumstances Germany, anxiously desiring to make an end of the quarrel, decided to annul the treaty with the Jaluit Company and to repeal their privileges."

**German Company Results.**—According to the Australian Interstate Commission,<sup>2</sup> the Deutsche Handels und Plantagen Gesellschaft had at the beginning of the war a capital of £137,500, and its dividends had increased from 8 per cent. in 1900 to 36 per cent. in 1912. The Deutsche Neu-Guinea Kompagnie, which was founded in 1885 and in the early days of the protectorate had administrative powers in Kaiser Wilhelmsland and the Bismarck Archipelago, had a capital of £375,000, and possessed the most extensive interests in New Guinea, operating its own line of steamers. Its administrative rights were resumed after the trouble with the British shipping line at Jaluit. The headquarters were at Rabaul.

The Hamburgische Sud See Aktien Gesellschaft, the successor of Mrs E. E. Forsayth, of New Guinea, had a capital of £110,000. Another Hamburg firm, HERNSHEIM & Co., was engaged in New Guinea and the Solomons.

The Jaluit Gesellschaft was also founded by Captain HERNSHEIM in 1880 to absorb German and American companies. It administered the Marshall Islands and had many fine trading stations, but its license for working the guano deposits of Nauru had been sold to a British company long before the war. This was the company whose imposition of shipping license fees and export duties against an Australian competitor was held by Great Britain to be a breach of the equal trading privileges contracted for in the agreement of 1885.

**German Shipping Advantages.**—While almost all the shipping entered and cleared at Samoa in 1911 was British, the Germans had driven their British rivals quite away from German New Guinea. From 1898 to 1907 an Australian

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Debates, 12th July 1905.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. Aust. 1918, No. 66, F. 13489.



firm courageously kept ships trading with the ports of the German protectorate and the islands to the north until the trouble over the Jaluit Company in the Marshalls. At the same time, as part of a widespread shipping plan, the settlers at Bismarck Archipelago were offered specially low rates on agreeing to ship only by German lines for a period of five years. British competition had then perforce to withdraw.

The Germans had communication with their own Europe-bound lines both at Hongkong and at Sydney; they had elaborate feeder systems by auxiliary schooners in the Line and Caroline Islands; and they were guaranteed back freights by large contracts from their government for carrying coal from New Zealand and Australian ports to the German depots at Samoa and north of the line. Finally, the law of 10th June 1914 had given power to increase the already heavy mail subsidies to the Far East, Australia, and the Pacific to the extent of 1,300,000 M. In addition to these advantages, there was the substantial disability imposed on British (*i.e.*, Australian) shipping by the white labour legislation of the Commonwealth.

**Off the Dead Centre.**—The report of the Australian Commission is an illuminating demonstration of what was meant by Prince Bernhard von Bülow, when he wrote, in *Imperial Germany* :—

“We succeeded at last, during the tenure of office of Secretary of State Herr Dernburg (1906-10), in getting our colonial policy off the dead centre. With great trouble and after a long fight, we were at last lucky enough to convince all civil parties of the commonalty of the usefulness and necessity of a positive colonial policy, and to gain their support for such. About the same time when we began to build our fleet we established ourselves, in the autumn of 1897, in Kiauchau, and a few months later we concluded the Shantung Treaty with China, which was one of the most significant actions in modern German history, and which secured for us a ‘place in the sun’ in the Far East on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, which have a great future before them.”

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FIRST NEW GUINEA INCIDENT

**Early Intercourse.**—Of the two main centres in which British and German interests came into conflict, there is no question that New Guinea is the more important. The material interests involved were immeasurably the greater. The rebuff to British policy was more significant, and finally, but possibly more important still, the conflict between the public opinion of the Australian colonies and the diplomatic expediencies of the Mother Country was very serious.

The first discovery of New Guinea by a European was when the Portuguese, Antonio de Abreu, happened there in 1511. It was revisited by his countryman Jorge de Meneses in 1526, and two years later a Spanish seaman, Alvaro de Saavedra, gave it the name of *Isla de Oro*. The first Dutch visitor, from the possessions in the Spice Islands, was William Jansz in 1606, and the first English, William Dampier, who in 1700 explored and so named the Island of New Britain. Bougainville, the French navigator, touched at New Guinea in 1768, and two years later Cook made a most useful examination of its coasts.

Forestalled in her colonising trend to the east, Spain did nothing to consummate the act of possession of New Guinea proclaimed by Torres in 1606. In 1792 Captain Bligh took possession of an island in Torres Straits, and in the following year the East Indiamen *Hormuzeer* and *Chesterfield* proclaimed the sovereignty of King George over New Guinea itself and the islands in Torres Straits.

The Dutch, by establishing Fort Dubus in Triton Bay in 1828 made effective their title to possession, which derived from four sources: (1) From the Sultan of Tidore, who acknowledged Dutch suzerainty; (2) From right of discovery; (3) From trade relations; (4) From the formal act of occupation. Fort Dubus itself was abandoned in 1835, but at a later date the

Netherlands Government asserted its rights over the western portion of the great island to the meridian of 141 deg. E.

In 1842 the British Admiralty ordered a survey of Torres Straits, in the belief that there would soon be a considerable intercourse through it with the Far East, and in 1846 Lieutenant Yule, of H.M.S. *Bramble*, formally hoisted the British flag at a point named by him "Cape Possession."

**The Veto to Adventurers, 1867.**—The active demand for England to assume the sovereignty of the unoccupied portion of the island had its origin in Australia. New Guinea was obviously an important strategic factor in the future of Australia, and the earliest steps taken to become acquainted with its coasts were dictated by considerations of policy, more especially commercial.

But the spirit of adventure in the Australian people gave rise to the first demand for its annexation. In 1867 a company was formed in Sydney to colonise the southern portion of New Guinea, and it approached the New South Wales Government for financial assistance. This was not forthcoming, but the Ministry of the day brought the project to the notice of the Home Government, together with a Cabinet minute affirming "that the increasing traffic between Australia and the Indian isles by way of Torres Strait makes the possession of New Guinea by the British Empire a matter of the highest importance to Australian colonists."<sup>1</sup>

The considered reply of the Colonial Secretary (the Duke of Buckingham) was to the effect that—

"Her Majesty's Government can give no plan of voluntary settlement in New Guinea the sanction of Imperial authority, and any persons who may embark in any such venture must neither look for aid nor protection from the national forces, nor for the confirmation by Her Majesty's Government of their titles to any acquisitions of land which they may profess to make from the natives."<sup>2</sup>

In weighing this declaration it has to be borne in mind that the Imperial Government was in the sixties very weary of colonial responsibilities. The great question of responsibility for oversea forces had been conclusively decided in a sense that was a deliberate instruction to the Colonial Office not to incur political liabilities which might require military sanction. The same note persists throughout the controversy on expansion in the Pacific during the next decade or two.

Buckingham's despatch, whatever was its motive, set a precedent which Colonial Office officials afterwards felt it

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1876, No. C. 1566.      <sup>2</sup> 14th September 1867: P.P., C. 1566.

impossible to depart from. But the spirit of private adventure was not to be curbed by an official veto. In 1872 a party of young Australians bound for the forbidden El Dorado were wrecked with much loss of life off the south coast of New Guinea. In May of the same year a scientific expedition financed by private individuals left for the southern coast, and a public meeting was held in Sydney to awaken interest in the subject.

**Australian Demand for Annexation.**—The Government of New South Wales again urged the annexation on the notice of the Imperial Government, and extended the demand to New Britain, Solomon, and New Hebrides in the South Pacific and the Marshall, Gilbert, and Ellice Islands near the equator.

"It appears to us," wrote the Premier, "that a more extended dominion in these waters on the part of the British Empire would be not only consistent with the maritime supremacy of England but would conduce much to the tranquillity and peace of these Australian colonies."

It was pointed out that even if the colonies could bear the cost of the administration of the islands, the Empire only itself could exercise the powers and authority necessary to inspire obedience. A government under a governor-general was proposed for the whole of Polynesia. No expensive establishment would be necessary, as he would spend most of his time travelling from point to point in a warship. The colonies would inevitably suffer, the memorandum continued, by the withdrawal of active and intelligent young men attracted by the enterprise of developing and governing these new dependencies; but they would gladly make the sacrifice "in the confident hope that in a few years, by the establishment of new commercial centres, trade would increase, the general prosperity of the colonies be augmented, and the Colonial Empire of Great Britain be enlarged and consolidated, and her beneficent rule extended over all the waters of the Pacific."<sup>1</sup>

We have here stated, in the despatch of the Duke of Buckingham and that of the New South Wales Government, the first conflict of views between the Colonial Office on the one hand and the public opinion of the colonies on the other. The conflict lasted for fully twenty years before it came to an unfortunate climax in 1883-5, and in a less acute form for

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 1566, p. 28.

some years later; but in its essential character it did not alter. These documents are historic.

**Moresby's Annexations.**—During the Franco-Prussian War, and especially during the discussion of peace terms, the merchants of the Hanse towns made strenuous efforts to induce Bismarck to enter upon a colonial policy as an outlet for German manufactures and an offset to the extensive oversea interests of France and England. But the agitation was entirely premature. The Chancellor would not entertain the idea of a colonial policy, and for some years to come Germany showed the same disinclination as England did for commitments in the Pacific. There were already German undertakings, notably in Fiji and Samoa, but it was another decade at least before they entered into the state policy of Germany.

In April 1873 Captain John Moresby, R.N., in H.M.S. *Basilisk*, was prosecuting the desultory survey of the channels through the eastern archipelago towards India and China when he discovered the deep-water passage known to-day as the China Strait, and established the insularity of the three islands now known as Basilisk, Hayter, and Moresby.

"There lay the vast island of New Guinea," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "dominating the shores of Northern Australia, separated at one point by only twenty miles of coral reef from British possessions, commanding the Torres Straits route, the transit of the Queensland mails, and our newly discovered route for Australian trade to China, commanding the rich and increasing pearl-shell fisheries and also the bêche-de-mer fishery. I felt that the occupation of this island by any foreign maritime power, more especially since the discovery of the *Basilisk's* harbours and anchorages, would be a standing menace to Queensland."

Moresby said he felt it his least duty to secure the islands against acquisition by any foreign power until the British Government could make up its mind. Consequently he hoisted the flag on Hayter's Island on 24th April 1873, and took possession of the three of them.

Moresby obtained permission to return the following season and continue his researches, and to assist him the Admiralty sent out a trained survey officer, Lieutenant Dawson. The result was entirely satisfactory, and only increased his enthusiasm for the great archipelago and the greater island.

<sup>1</sup> *Discoveries and Surveys in New Guinea, etc.*, by Captain J. Moresby, R.N., 1876.



"We felt," he wrote, "that the *Basilisk* had opened a new and accurately surveyed highway for commerce between Australia, New Guinea, and China."

**An Australian Scheme.**—The Australian interest was not in the China passage at all, but in New Guinea itself, and the possibility that it might be occupied by a foreign power. A well-known missionary, within a few weeks of Moresby's act of annexing the islands, asked the Governor of New South Wales whether Britain claimed sovereignty in any part of New Guinea, as he was informed "that a powerful German concentration is on its way to the Pacific with the intent of founding a colony or penal settlement."<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1874 Carnarvon had the matter brought to his notice by Mr Labilliere, and he transmitted it to the Australian colonies, asking them for a statement of their opinions, and what they would be prepared to do in the way of financing the annexation if it were carried into effect.<sup>2</sup> The principle had been put to the colonies in the case of Fiji a few months earlier that they should be prepared to share amongst themselves the cost of the administration.

**The Colonies and Responsibility.**—The replies were generally in favour of annexation, but not nearly so unanimous as regards paying the expense. New Zealand favoured the annexation partly "from a strong national feeling," partly because commerce follows the flag, and partly from fear that another power would step in. New South Wales proposed that the cost should be met by granting a charter to an Australian company to develop and administer the eastern end of New Guinea, the Mother Country retaining the right of appointing the governor. Sir Henry Parkes's minute re-echoed the belief previously expressed that men of high character and great wealth in Australia would be glad to engage in such an enterprise and that the annexation would not cost Great Britain a shilling. The effect which this rosy anticipation might have had in Downing Street was neutralised by the caustic remark of the Governor (Sir Hercules Robinson) that "the annexation would entail on Australasia neither responsibility nor expense, whilst any advantages which could possibly accrue in the future would be largely shared, if not altogether monopolised, by this colony."

For Victoria the reply, worded by the Governor (Sir George Bowen), was somewhat similar. He did not think

<sup>1</sup> W. Wyatt Gill to Colonial Treasurer, N.S.W., 28th June 1873.

<sup>2</sup> Carnarvon to governors, circular despatch, 17th April 1874.

the matter would require a decision before the Australian colonies were federated—they were in fact federated twenty-six years later, and sixteen years after Germany had seized half of eastern New Guinea. “There are few thinking men in Victoria,” he added, “who do not agree with the principle that as a rule—liable to exceptions in peculiar cases—Great Britain has already black subjects enough.” The remark was first used in a speech by Lord Derby a few weeks earlier.

**Queensland not Deeply Interested.**—Governor Cairns painted rather an amusing picture of the indifference of the nearest colony to New Guinea. He said that since his arrival in Queensland nobody had even mentioned the subject to him, and he could not believe they were sufficiently interested to be willing to pay anything. But personally he held the opinion very strongly that it would be a standing nuisance to Australia if any other power occupied New Guinea and that some power certainly would take it before long.

“I believe,” he said, “that if Great Britain holds back for a very brief space of time, another power—Germany, or Italy, or France, perhaps Russia or the United States, will make an attempt. I am persuaded that the merest rumour of it would have a bad effect on the relations of the Mother Country with its colonies in these seas, and I hold that, to Queensland especially, the establishment of any foreign state upon her water frontier would be nothing less than a permanent disaster.”<sup>1</sup>

**Parliamentary Resolutions.**—Cairns was genuinely prophetic. Though Queensland at the moment was not at all interested, within twelve months she had taken her position, as might be expected, in the forefront of the agitation for annexation. The Legislative Assembly on 17th June 1875 passed a resolution demanding that the annexation by Moresby over the eastern islands should be extended over the whole unoccupied portion of New Guinea. Cairns remarks facetiously that there is nothing in the resolution committing the colony to share in the cost. And Queensland was not the only one of the colonies about which its governor spoke thus deprecatingly.

Having been compelled to annex Fiji without succeeding in unloading the financial responsibility on to the colonies

<sup>1</sup> For correspondence on this question see P.P. 1876, C. 1566. Prof. Egerton's *Short History of British Colonial Policy* gives an excellent résumé of the controversy.

which had demanded it, Carnarvon was not disposed to repeat the incident, and he would not allow himself to be hurried into a decision. Meanwhile pressure was being put upon him from England. A company called the New Guinea Colonisation Association, with the Duke of Manchester and Lord Stanley of Alderley as sponsors, presented a proposal to despatch an expedition of 200 men and 50 officers enrolled under the Volunteer Act, and protested vigorously that the "landing" which it proposed to "effect," "with a view to eventual annexation," was purely commercial and by no means designed to force the hand of the British Government. But it was too much for Carnarvon. Not only did he dislike the thing on "public and constitutional grounds," but he rebutted warmly the suggestion that annexation was in the mind of the Government, and refused to sanction even tacitly the acquisition of land in New Guinea by British subjects.

**The Annexation Refused.**—This was in October. The colonists were quite well prepared, therefore, for the terms of the despatch of 8th December, in which, with Derby's approval, Carnarvon brought the correspondence to a close<sup>1</sup> :—

"I could wish," he wrote, "that some facts had been stated or some arguments adduced, to substantiate a view which will naturally be thought here to need proof. There is, I am satisfied, not only no disinclination but a hearty willingness on the part of the people and Parliament of this country to accept, whether in expense or in political responsibility, the common burdens of that Empire of which they are justly proud; but it is simply impossible either for me to admit, or if even I were to make the admission, to persuade English people, that the Australian colonies have no special interest in the annexation of New Guinea, and that the responsibility of the measure rests exclusively with the Imperial Government. While, therefore, I am ready to give the fullest consideration to any advantage, if such can be shown, which would accrue to the Empire at large from the acquisition of the very great area of country now under consideration, I cannot at present perceive any grounds other than that of its interest to Australia on which such a proposal could be seriously entertained."

The proposal was made, he said, in the absence of any English settlement, and the trading advantages accruing would all go to Australia. England had only a limited liability to control places "where British subjects and foreigners went to trade, and she had not failed to meet

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1876, C. 1566.

this liability fully through the High Commission for the Western Pacific. He would regret to see a foreign power step in, but saw no indication of it. The United States adhered to its traditional policy of not acquiring remote possessions, and—

“The German Government has, I am informed, very lately intimated that it has no intention of acquiring colonies, and this intimation had special reference to New Guinea. And if, contrary to all present expectation, any other European power should contemplate the acquisition of any Pacific island, it may be confidently supposed that it would not without previous communication with this Government assume jurisdiction over a place the expediency of annexing which to the British Empire is well known to have been formally recommended and put under the consideration of Her Majesty’s Government. To assume any other line of action would be to assume a course of conduct very little consistent with those friendly professions which Her Majesty’s Government constantly receive from other governments and states.

“I request you, therefore, to inform your ministers that while Her Majesty’s Government will continue to examine by the light of such information as they may be able to procure the arguments for and against the extension of British sovereignty over New Guinea, or any other of the Pacific Islands, they are at present far from being satisfied that such a course is expedient, and see no reason for hastening a decision on so important a question. In the meantime, with a view to avert as far as possible the disastrous bloodshed and mortality which are likely to arise out of the speculations of trading companies or quasi-military expeditions, and also with a view to reserve to the Crown that power which cannot properly be surrendered, and the abdication of which in former times and in similar circumstances has led to very great trouble, loss, and expense,”

the governor was instructed to make public the warning against the acquisition of land outside the jurisdiction of the British Crown.

Thus closed what may be described as the first New Guinea incident. It is to be noted that Carnarvon does not definitely demand that the colonies should bear the expense of the annexation.

**Admiralty Researches Continue.**—There is no clear evidence of German plans at that time, and Carnarvon was evidently able to reassure Australia in good faith. It is quite evident that he himself had no fear at all of being forestalled in the annexation.

And yet there seem to have been some vague doubts



at the Colonial Office, for within a very short time we find it moving the Admiralty to take further precautions by making a survey of the coast "more immediately opposite Cape York," as it was important that "H.M. Government should at any moment be in a position to secure the best situation for the formation of a settlement on that part of the coast, without prejudice to the question whether or not a more extended annexation should eventually take place."

But the Admiralty had been prosecuting its survey independently, and Moresby had fixed upon what he considered the best site, on an island adjacent to the China Strait, for a refitting station for ships. No new explorations, the Admiralty declared, could add to the data already in its possession.<sup>1</sup>

**Action Compelled by Gold Discoveries.**—And so things went on for a year or two without any further steps being taken either in Australia or in England. Suddenly in 1878 the even tenor of things was disturbed by the announcement that a goldfield had been discovered on the mainland of New Guinea, and that hundreds of Australians—adventurous young men and experienced diggers—were rushing thither in the hope of making their fortunes. The news was fatal to the policy of *laissez-faire*. Wherever gold is discovered some jurisdiction must inevitably be introduced, and even the Colonial Office had long since accepted the axiom that if such a position should force itself the jurisdiction must be British and no other.

By the arrangements already made for policing the Western Pacific, British residents in New Guinea came under the control of the High Commissioner, but foreigners were under no control at all. In the new conditions of a goldfield this was an impossible position. Gordon, the High Commissioner, happened to be in England on leave when the news arrived. He had always been strongly adverse to the assumption of British sovereignty over New Guinea, but he candidly admitted that in the altered circumstances he had changed his mind:—

"I regret to say," he wrote,<sup>2</sup> "that after the most deliberate reflection I am irresistibly compelled to adopt a conclusion which I should have wished to avoid, and which I was at first inclined to think might be avoided, viz., that the annexation by Great

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1876, liv.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 3617 : Gordon to Colonial Office, 22nd November 1878.



Britain of at least certain portions of New Guinea will speedily become inevitable, even if the necessity for such a step has not already arisen. . . . I must confess that I see no middle course between annexation and the abandonment of all control over the acts of British subjects in New Guinea, involving a practical acquiescence in the establishment there of a reign of lawless violence and anarchy."

Special commissions were forthwith issued to some naval captains to act as deputy commissioners of the High Commission on the mainland of New Guinea. The Colonial Office, with the old bogey of military garrisons in its mind, wondered what force would be required to protect the proposed deputy commissioner "against the attacks of natives or the insolence of white men." The Secretary of State (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) thought the best solution would be the stationing of a cruiser "for a definite time" on the coast. He evidently contemplated the eventual annexation "in the event of such arrangements being come to with one or more of the Australasian colonies as would justify Her Majesty's Government in consenting to advise the extension of British sovereignty over the eastern portion of the island."<sup>1</sup>

But the clouds of impending responsibility which overshadowed the Colonial Office happily passed away by natural process. Before the end of the year, before any murders or outrages had accrued, the goldfields were proved a failure, and the troublesome British adventurers, poorer and wiser, were dwindling back to their homes. So that Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was able to say, with evident relief, that "the decision in a matter of so much importance may properly be deferred until further and more decided information has been received as to the likelihood of a considerable white population establishing itself on the island" (Colonial Office to Gordon, 31st December 1878).

**German Menace Revived.**—Towards the end of 1882 fresh warnings reached the Colonial Office, from more than one source, of the promotion of German colonising ventures for the Pacific. Once more Derby was assured, by Granville, that he "had no reason to suppose that the German Government contemplated any scheme of colonisation:"<sup>2</sup> and again, relying on this assurance, he declared that the question of annexation could not be reopened.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 3617: Colonial Office to Gordon, 5th October 1878.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*: Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 18th December 1882.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*: Colonial Office to F. B. Labilliere, 28th December 1882.

But the colony of Queensland had taken genuine alarm, and refused to be comforted. In February 1883 the Premier (Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith) cabled advising annexation as a matter of urgency on several distinct grounds: (1) the safety of the commercial highway through Torres Straits; (2) the necessity for jurisdiction over whites in New Guinea; (3) the fact that a coaling station was already established; (4) fear of foreign acquisition. So much impressed was Queensland by the threatened danger, that she offered to bear the whole expense of the annexation and "to take formal possession on receipt of Imperial authority by cable" (M'Ilwraith to Agent-General for Queensland, 26th February 1883).

When the Agent-General broached the matter to the Colonial Office, Derby demurred at the somewhat informal manner in which it had been brought forward, and wanted some assurance that public opinion in the colony was likely to sanction the step through a vote of Parliament (Derby to Sir A. E. Kennedy, 8th March 1883). That the question had taken on a sudden and genuine accession of interest in Australia he was soon to understand beyond doubt, from shoal of despatches on the subject. One of the most serious of these was from the Governor of New South Wales (Lord Augustus Loftus) warning the Colonial Office in the most earnest terms that whereas no foreign aggression was likely in 1874, attention had since been so constantly directed to the importance and value of New Guinea that the whole aspect had changed. France had completed her annexation of Tahiti and was paying attention to points of import on the Panama steam routes. Germany was now showing a keen interest in Samoa, and a suggestion was put forward—far-fetched it seems to us now, but nevertheless in keeping with the conceptions of the time—that Russia was likely to blossom forth into a naval station on the coast called after the Russian naturalist, Baron Maclay-Miklouho.

Lord Loftus did not propose annexation, which he believed would be the prelude to a state of endless warfare with the native population, but he put forward the old fantastic fiction of the Colonial Office in favour of "native sovereignties." What he suggested was to enter into friendly relations with the tribes along the coast, and with the concurrence of their chiefs to "gain a protectorate which would enable us to hoist the British flag so as to preclude the possibility" of a foreign annexation. Had the Colonial Office understood anything of the tribal system of the

Papuans it would not have entertained the idea for a moment, for practical sovereignty anywhere in the Pacific did not exist.

**Excitement in Australia.**—Derby could not any longer suggest that Australia had not real grounds for alarm. The acquisition of New Guinea had already been openly discussed in Germany,<sup>1</sup> and the British Minister at Brussels had advised the Foreign Office of a proposal to form a company to make a scientific exploration of the country, and gradually to take possession of it as a commercial colony framed on the Dutch model. It was expected, wrote the Minister, that there would be little difficulty in carrying out this object, "as the island belongs to no European power, and no serious resistance is to be apprehended from the natives."<sup>2</sup> Lord Ampthill followed this up with official inquiries in Berlin, and was informed that the venture was quite a private one "and not as yet supported by the Imperial German Government," which, moreover, "did not promote any scheme for the increase of emigration from Germany."<sup>3</sup>

The Blue Books of the time throw an interesting light on the keenness with which the subject was pursued in Australia. Public meetings were held in all the colonies and resolutions passed demanding Imperial action, and all the colonial governments supported the action of Queensland. At this period there seems to have been no reasonable ground for Derby to doubt the reality of the feeling in Australia, and he had his own evidence that there was something in the particular menace of Germany to which they referred.

**Queensland Annexes on its Own Responsibility.**—The only weakness, perhaps, in the case which M'Ilwraith made on 26th February was his specific condition that the proposed annexation should become an appanage of his own colony. Most of the colonies agreed to this on the understanding that Queensland's interest in the welfare of New Guinea was much more direct and intimate than their own, but it was a weak point in view of Queensland's reputation in connection with the kanaka traffic.

Before the mailed despatches on the subject could reach London, Queensland on her own responsibility had taken a dramatic step. On 14th April Lord Derby heard from a news agency in London that formal possession had been

<sup>1</sup> *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27th November 1882.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 3617, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> P.P., C. 3691, p. 5.

taken of New Guinea. He at once cabled to Queensland for confirmation, and on the 16th received the following reply from the governor:—

“To prevent foreign powers from taking possession of New Guinea, Queensland Government through police magistrate Thursday Island took formal possession in Her Majesty’s name on 4th instant, pending your decision on my despatch this mail.”

Almost simultaneously came cablegrams from Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia supporting Queensland’s action and asking that the step be ratified, while Queensland herself cabled emphasising the fact that no expense whatever would fall on the Imperial exchequer.

**How Action was Taken.**—It seems that the minute of the Queensland executive authorising the despatch of an officer of the Government “to take possession in Her Majesty’s name of the island of New Guinea in anticipation of a reply to the despatch” was passed on 15th March. Five days later Mr H. M. Chester, the magistrate at Thursday Island, was instructed to proceed to New Guinea “to take formal possession of so much of the island as was not already in the occupation or possession of the Dutch.” He proceeded two days later.

Explaining his action to the governor, M’Ilwraith says there appeared to be every probability of the island being taken possession of by a foreign power, a step which would not only lose a valuable territory to the British Crown but would establish “a source of danger to the colonies, the extent of which cannot at present be fully appreciated.”

“The Queensland Government have acted,” he added, “under the full belief that the matter was too urgent to admit of the delay necessarily involved in waiting for instructions from the Imperial Government. It is hoped that the Secretary of State will perceive that in the step taken by the Queensland Government they have been guided by considerations of expediency which justified their promptness . . . and by the consideration that by undertaking the whole of the expense they effectually disposed of the only objection raised on the part of the Home Government during previous correspondence on the subject” (M’Ilwraith to Kennedy, 13th April 1883).

Derby demanded by cable to know what specific information led the Government to suppose foreign intervention imminent.

“General rumours Germany and Italy,” replied the adminis-



trator; "special rumour German corvette *Carola* was leaving Sydney for South Seas with object of annexation."

She did leave on 18th March. Kennedy in his covering despatch informed Derby that he was entirely satisfied with the action of his Government. Their apprehension seemed to him reasonable and their promptitude laudable. All the other colonies concurred, and he had less difficulty in dealing with the matter from the knowledge that the annexation required Imperial ratification before it became definitive (Kennedy to Derby, 26th April 1883).

Chester's proclamation, which he read at Port Moresby, was as follows:—

"I, Henry Majoribanks Chester, Resident Magistrate at Thursday Island in the colony of Queensland, acting under instructions from the Government of the said colony, do hereby take possession of all that portion of New Guinea and the islands and islets adjacent thereto lying between the 141st and 155th meridians of east longitude in the name and on behalf of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, her heirs and successors. In token whereof I have hoisted and saluted the British flag at Port Moresby in New Guinea this fourth day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three. God Save the Queen.

"(Signed) HENRY M. CHESTER."

**British Government makes Inquiries.**—What follows is of interest. In May 1883 Lord Ampthill, the Ambassador at Berlin, warned Granville that Bismarck felt very strongly about German claims in Fiji and intended to press for reconsideration of them, merely "to show Germany that he could protect her interests all over the world." Ampthill advised that the matter should be dealt with "gracefully and speedily so as to leave him no time to get up an agitation."<sup>1</sup>

Before actually repudiating the Queensland annexation, Derby caused inquiries to be made by the Foreign Office to assure himself "that no foreign power" would attempt to intervene in the territory included in Chester's proclamation. He considered it "desirable to guard, as far as possible, against the risk of any foreign claim being set up" (Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 18th June 1883).<sup>2</sup> To this Granville replied that he had "reason to believe that no such action is intended on the part of any foreign power." He had, we know, inquired directly of France, and M. Jules Ferry had

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Earl Granville*, by Lord Edward Fitzmaurice, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 4273.



"affirmed very positively that no design of the sort was entertained by the French Government" (Lyons to Granville, 27th June 1883). But he does not appear to have made any special inquiries of Germany or Italy. It is remarkable that he should not have given any weight to Amphthill's warnings about Bismarck's new attitude, which he does not appear even to have mentioned to Derby.

However that may be, Derby wrote on 11th July, almost three months after hearing of Queensland's act of annexation, conveying the decision of the Imperial Government.

**Queensland Annexation Repudiated**—"Her Majesty's Government are unable to approve the proceedings of your Government in this matter," the despatch read. "It is well understood that the officers of a colonial government have no power or authority to act beyond the limits of their colony, and if this constitutional principle is not carefully observed serious difficulties and complications must arise. If there had been any evidence of the intention of a foreign power to take possession of any part of New Guinea the views and proposals of the Colonial Government could have been placed before Her Majesty's Government by telegraph, and if the circumstances had justified immediate action it could have been taken without a delay of more than a very few hours. It is therefore much to be regretted that your advisers should, without apparent necessity, have taken on themselves the exercise of powers which they did not possess."

Derby said the apprehension of foreign action was "altogether indefinite and unfounded," and that the Imperial Government had the strongest reasons for believing that no such step was contemplated. Nor was early settlement by a white population likely. Moreover, even if the time had arrived there would have been no necessity or justification for embracing all that Chester had "annexed." He then proceeded to develop the theory of the sovereignty of native races:—

"It is certain that they have given no sign of a desire that their land should be occupied by white men. It would require exceptionally strong reasons to justify the annexation of these tribes and their territory, and in the absence of any such reasons a grave responsibility would be incurred in establishing the Queen's jurisdiction over a large coloured population which would certainly resist subjugation and has apparently nothing to gain by it."

The Secretary of State was on surer ground when he

assailed the wisdom of appointing Queensland as the colony which should have the guardianship of the proposed protectorate, for Queensland had had more than any of the others to do with the native labour traffic and had not successfully overcome all its difficulties. The whole Pacific question, he continued, would have to be dealt with on broad and clearly defined lines.

The Government, he said, regretted having to refuse assent to proposals

"in regard to places and questions not specially concerning those of Her Majesty's subjects who live in other parts of the Empire, and I trust that the time is not now distant when in respect of such questions (if not for other purposes of government) the Australasian colonies will effectively combine together and provide the cost of carrying out any policy which after mature consideration they may unite in recommending, and which Her Majesty's Government may think it right and expedient to adopt."

The High Commission for the Western Pacific seemed to Derby to provide for all immediate necessities, and if the colonies would find the money to station a deputy commissioner on the coast of New Guinea, the British Government would strengthen the Australian squadron so as to enable it to keep ships more constantly in those waters. "A protectorate thus gradually established over the coast tribes," he concluded, "would be capable of meeting the principal requirements of the case for some time to come."<sup>1</sup>

**Annoyance in Australia.**—M'Ilwraith replied to each of the arguments seriatim, remarking prophetically: "At the stage at which the act of occupation by a foreign power could be regarded as an unfriendly one, it must have been already accomplished. If the Imperial Government eventually annexes, not only is no advantage to be gained by postponement, but in the meantime the course which is now open and clear will have become beset with difficulties, and our lost opportunities will have to be recovered at a much greater cost than would be incurred if we were to avail ourselves of them without delay."

The repudiation of the annexation was historic in the development of Australian federation. By forcing on the colonies the practical necessity of co-operation in their external affairs, it crystallised opinion on the proposal and advanced it a long step in a few months. M'Ilwraith was

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 3691: Derby to officer administering the government of Queensland.

quickest to act. His memorandum to the other premiers calling for some decided and concerted action was dated 10th July, when he only knew by his Agent-General's private cablegram what answer Derby was about to give.

"I submit," he wrote, "that a case has arisen which may be made use of to call into existence the higher forms of government required to give effect to this policy of annexation."<sup>1</sup>

The other colonies were quick to respond. Even New South Wales, which had never gone the whole length in enthusiasm for annexation, saw the force of the new situation.

"I am not prepared to say," wrote the Colonial Secretary (Sir A. Stuart) to Lord Augustus Loftus, "that there was an imminent prospect of New Guinea being taken possession of by any foreign power. Yet I do fear now that the prominence which has been given to the subject will of itself cause some nation to take it up as a strong strategic point in the future domination of these seas."

**The Intercolonial Convention.**—When the representatives of the colonies met at Sydney at the end of the year, the annexation question was uppermost in all minds, and there was a tendency to feel that the conference had been invited by Derby to consider something much wider than the New Guinea question. Sir Henry Parkes, who was in London at the time, telegraphed urging the New South Wales delegates to confine themselves to the question of New Guinea, on which he felt they had a good chance of getting their way; but the Convention took the root-and-branch course, and condemned any acquisition of territory south of the equator by a foreign power as "highly detrimental to the safety and well-being of the British possessions and injurious to the interests of the Empire." Ways and means were left entirely to the discretion of the Imperial Government.

On the special question of New Guinea a resolution was passed urging that "such steps should be immediately taken as will most conveniently and effectively secure the incorporation within the British Empire of so much of New Guinea and the small islands adjacent as is not claimed by the Government of the Netherlands." The wording of the last phrase was another challenge to Derby; and he did not lose sight of it.

The delegates agreed also to recommend their parliaments to pass permanent appropriations for defraying "such

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 3863 : Memo. by Premier of Queensland, 10th July 1883.

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share of the cost incurred in giving effect to the resolutions as H.M. Government, having regard to the relative importance of Imperial and Australasian interests, may deem fair and reasonable."

The resolutions were passed on 4th December and were immediately cabled to London.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For proceedings of the Convention, see P.P., C. 3863.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PARTITION OF NEW GUINEA

**Beginnings of German Colonial Policy.**—The fears expressed by Sir A. Stuart were only too well grounded. The mere canvassing of the subject through so many years of controversy between England and her colonies had served to emphasise to Germany the attractions of the unoccupied country, and when the subject next came up for discussion Germany's intervention was actual.

The German people, like the English, were thinking ahead of their Government. While the Hamburg colonising school were imagining rosy schemes of oversea expansion, the Imperial German Government, wedded to Liszt's conception of the all-powerful state, saw still greater possibilities in the intensive development of German industrialism at home, and looked with a cold eye on the dreams of the adventurers. As we shall see, this was about to change. Bismarck had refused point-blank to adopt any colonising projects at the time of the Franco-Prussian War, and he remained firmly opposed to them until German interests abroad complained that he could not defend them against foreign aggression.

It is clear that the South Sea schemes of 1880, although quite private ventures, relied on an understanding that they should be protected wherever they established themselves, and the acquisition of a naval station in Samoa was a good earnest of this. Then came the Fiji land claims in 1883. They had been duly considered and adjusted by a British commission shortly after the colony was annexed, and German claims had received common justice with British. It was not because they had been unjustly treated that Bismarck demanded a rehearing, but purely, as Ampthill showed, to demonstrate to the people of Germany that he was able to protect their interests wherever they were. The British Government gave way because it had other troubles

in which it did not wish to have Germany antagonistic ; and the claims were reheard.

**Derby Proposes to Act.**—In May 1884 Derby intimated in a circular despatch to the colonies the intention of the Government to set up some form of jurisdiction in New Guinea. He repeated his confidence that "no foreign power contemplates interference with New Guinea," but added as a reason for taking action : "In the absence of any controlling authority it is always possible that subjects of a foreign power might require the protection or intervention of their Government ; and British subjects also, by coming into collision with the natives, or by setting up claims to land, might cause complications which would give much trouble."<sup>1</sup>

There is no suggestion here of any move having been made by Germany, but it is interesting to note that at a much later stage in the controversy Germany claimed to have announced to Lord Granville, in a communication which the British Government denies ever receiving, her intention of developing a foothold in New Guinea.

**Count Munster's Conversations.**—It was three months after the date of Derby's despatch, on 8th August, that the German Ambassador in London (Count Munster) waited on Granville and informed him "that his Government wished to take steps to protect more efficiently those islands and those parts of islands in the South Sea archipelago where German trade is daily increasing," and to come to a friendly understanding with Great Britain "as to the general principles to be observed for the protection of subjects of the two countries respectively, and also as to the limits of the islands and territories in which either country is most interested." He added that the German Government regarded Australia's anxiety to exclude foreign establishments from the adjacent shores of New Guinea as "perfectly natural, but the German Government are of opinion that there are parts of the wild country on the north side of New Guinea which might be available as a field for German enterprise" (Granville to Ampthill, 9th August 1884).<sup>2</sup>

It is important to note at once that Germany clearly hinted her intention of establishing herself in the north of New Guinea, so that her later action thus far cannot have come as a surprise. By this announcement, too, Bismarck

<sup>1</sup> Derby to governors of colonies, 9th May 1884 : P.P., C. 3839.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 4273, p. 4.

was throwing down the gage to public opinion in Australia, for the Intercolonial Convention had demanded the annexation of the whole of non-Dutch New Guinea.

Granville, according to his narrative to Ampthill, assured Munster that Britain was not at all jealous of German colonisation so long as it did not clash with her own acquired rights, and that he recognised "the important positions which Germany occupies in some of the islands." The Colonial Office would probably approve of "a more precise definition of the places in which the two countries respectively held a predominant position." On this point Granville informed Munster, "but at present in confidence," that the negotiations between the Imperial and Colonial governments in regard to New Guinea were "nearer a conclusion than is yet known to the public."

Gladstone was questioned in the House of Commons on 11th August, when he was unable to state definitely the limits of the proposed British protectorate, except that it would not include the islands to the north and east. On the same day Mr Evelyn Ashley stated that as soon as possible a high commissioner was to be appointed for New Guinea who should be "apart from and independent of the governorship of Fiji." The matter had been delayed mainly owing to uncertainty as to what form the jurisdiction should take.<sup>1</sup>

**A Free Hand to Germany.**—After the German communications had been discussed at a meeting of Cabinet, Granville was able to inform Munster that "H.M. Government had no desire to oppose the extension of German colonisation in the islands of the South Seas which were unoccupied by any civilised power"; that the extension of some form of British authority in New Guinea which would shortly be announced would "only embrace that part of the island which specially interests the Australian colonies, *without prejudice to any territorial questions beyond those limits.*" The italicised words came into grave dispute at a later stage, when Germany contended that they gave her a free hand outside the boundaries of the British protectorate.

The conversations up to this date embodied all the grievances which the Australian colonies afterwards held to the account of Great Britain. In the first place, the warnings which they had given and which had been requited with persistent scorn were proved well founded. In the

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 3rd series, vol. ccxcii., pp. 438-9.

second, the British Government, without consulting or informing the colonies, had already given an implied undertaking to Germany, upon which they could not go back, that she would be permitted to establish herself in a portion of New Guinea.

**Granville's Slowness to take Alarm.**—Now followed a curious interlude, in which Derby and Granville were separated by diverse influences and fears. Derby was fully alive to the dangers of the position, and it must be said for him that, humiliating as his position was, he hastened to repair the damage caused by the delay of sixteen months when he was reading the colonies lectures on conduct. He wrote to Granville on 28th August, stating that circumstances rendered it most desirable that the proclamation of the Queen's protectorate over so much of the island "as it is intended to bring within the scope of it should no longer be delayed," and that he proposed "to take immediate steps to give effect to Her Majesty's intention."

Granville, on the other hand, was only beginning to be alarmed, and the cause of his alarm was not the disappointment of the colonies, but his anxiety not to offend Germany. Writing to Lord Northbrook on the 16th he said: "I am afraid we shall find Bismarck a great difficulty in our path. He is making use of us for electioneering purposes. We have already met all his open grievances—the German claims in Fiji, Angra Pequena, and the South Sea Islands—but he has a secret one" (Heligoland).<sup>1</sup> To make things worse Ampthill, whose personality was of inestimable value in the crisis, died on the 25th.

Derby's intention was to assume the protectorate of all the coasts of New Guinea not in possession of the Dutch, with the exception of that part of the north coast between the 145th deg. E. longitude and the Dutch boundary. That is to say, he would leave for the Germans or for future disposal only 300 miles of the northern coast-line. He would include the whole of what was called "the Maclay coast," whose tribes had asked for British protection. In fact, Derby says that this request was "a principal consideration with H.M. Government when they determined to advise Her Majesty to assume this responsibility." This proclamation had been approved by Cabinet at its last meeting before the autumn recess, and Derby insisted that it should be put into execution without further delay.

**Granville's Fear of Germany.**—Anxious to timidity not

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii., p. 361.



to embitter relations with Germany, Granville took a much more serious view of the proposed step. He told Gladstone that Northbrook, Lyons, and himself were "strongly of opinion that the Colonial Office should not immediately issue the proclamation . . . without further communication with Germany—unless we mean purposely to quarrel with Bismarck." Cabinet agreed. The proclamation was postponed. The warship which was to have proclaimed the protectorate was delayed by telegraphic orders.

Having opened negotiations on the subject, the Foreign Secretary considered it proper to inform Germany in detail of the limits of the proposed protectorate, and the Ambassador at Berlin was ordered to make this communication as evidence of the desire of the British Government "to promote the friendly understanding which the German Government have proposed to establish" (Granville to Mr Scott, 17th September 1884). Granville had by now become aware of the strength of colonial feeling on the New Guinea question, for he admitted to Gladstone: "The Colonial Office and Childers are very strong that we must not irritate Australians in this matter, and the matter does not brook delay" (30th September 1884).<sup>1</sup>

Bismarck had clearly thrown to the winds all nicety about being on good terms with England, and was showing his teeth in earnest. England had given way to him over the Fiji claims. She had agreed not to take the whole of non-Dutch New Guinea. She had come to him with an almost apologetic expression of her intentions before taking action. Yet he was far from satisfied. This last act of courtesy invited him to quarrel with the terms. And he pushed his demands from point to point in a most disquieting way. Derby was for resisting, but the Government was embarrassed on all sides, with the troubles of Egypt and Ireland towering over all others.

**Strained Relations.**—Germany lost no time in promoting the negotiation. On 11th September the Chargé d'Affaires informed Granville that his Government considered that the question of territorial spheres could be best dealt with by a commission, and hastened to nominate as its members Herr Krauel, the Consul-General at Sydney, and Dr Stuebel, Councillor of Legation and Acting Consul at Samoa. He further suggested that the commission should meet at Levuka, in Fiji, as a central spot, and because Krauel was going there in any case to investigate the land claims.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville.*

Derby agreed to the joint commission except for the New Guinea question, which had been the subject of separate communications. He thought, moreover, that the subject could be "discussed generally" better in London than in the Pacific (Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 19th September 1884).<sup>1</sup>

The Chargé d'Affaires at once joined issue. He took unambiguous exception to the extent of the New Guinea protectorate, and contended that the spheres of influence should itself be a matter for the commission to decide. The suggestion of reserving the New Guinea question was not quite clearly expressed in the note of the Ambassador in Berlin, who repeated the words used by Granville on 8th August, viz.: "The extension of some form of British authority in New Guinea will only embrace that part of the island which specially interests the Australian colonies, without prejudice to any territorial questions beyond those limits." In accepting the proposal the German Government made no reference at all to New Guinea, but when the limits of the protectorate were communicated to Berlin, Count Plessen was instructed to reply:—

"The projected extension of the British protectorate in the north and north-east of New Guinea, after the previous declaration of Your Excellency, comes unexpectedly to the Imperial Government, and they wish temporarily to reserve to themselves the adoption of any attitude on the subject. According to the conception of the Imperial Government, the delimitation of the areas which interest both sides on that stretch of coast should be the subject of a friendly understanding by means of a commission" (Count Plessen to Granville, 27th September 1884).

**Granville gives Way.**—Granville gave way again for the sake of good feeling. On 9th October the Ambassador in Berlin informed the Secretary of State: "Her Majesty's Government have decided that the declaration to be made shall limit the British protectorate to the whole of the south coast, including the islands contiguous to it, instead of that which they had at first proposed. This will be done without prejudice to any territorial question beyond those limits." The note expressed the pleasure with which the Government had "come to an arrangement in which they find themselves in perfect accord with Germany," and suggested that questions arising beyond the limits of the protectorate would be better dealt with diplomatically than referred to the commission.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4273.

The position then was that, in deference to German wishes, Great Britain had cancelled a great part of the proposed protectorate, and had surrendered "without prejudice" for future diplomatic discussion, the whole of the northern coast, including the Maclay coast, which it had previously described as the principal reason for declaring the protectorate. If Downing Street had looked weak, it had at any rate been scrupulously fair and considerate to German interests.

**Proclamation of the Protectorate.**—While these negotiations were proceeding in Europe the Australian colonies, knowing nothing whatever about them, went on with their arrangements for financing the hoped-for protectorate. Derby having complained in May that they had not made provision for the necessary expenditure, Queensland and Victoria gave a joint guarantee as a temporary measure, and each of the colonial parliaments in turn agreed to bear their share of the cost. From the colonial point of view there was nothing more to wait for; but matters were developing in Europe of which they were quite ignorant, and week by week they waited in vain for the proclamation.

The Deputy Commissioner for New Guinea (Mr H. H. Romilly) had been waiting at a Queensland port since 10th September for orders to proceed on this duty, but it was not till 8th October that Derby gave orders to act. The protectorate was to extend "for the present along the southern shore of New Guinea, and over the country adjacent thereto, from the 141st meridian of east longitude eastward, as far as East Cape, including any islands adjacent to the mainland in Goschen Strait," and to the south-east as far as Kosman Island inclusive (Colonial Office to Admiralty, 8th October 1884).<sup>1</sup>

It was intended that the commodore on the Australian station should proclaim the protectorate, but on the 9th Derby sent a cablegram direct to Romilly which appears to have led the latter to believe that the duty devolved on him.<sup>2</sup> He had no instructions at all from the commodore, and he proceeded in H.M.S. *Harrier* to carry out his orders. Erskine had previously been told to despatch the *Harrier* with Romilly on board "to assist you in carrying your

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4217, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> "British protectorate New Guinea from Dutch boundary to East Cape and islands to Kosman Island. Notify settlement and purchase land forbidden." P.P., C. 4217, p. 36. Romilly actually proclaimed the whole of non-Dutch New Guinea.

orders into execution" (Admiralty to Erskine, 9th October 1884). He got his own telegraphic instructions on the 16th, and proceeded from Brisbane on his errand in the last week of October.

The contretemps was unwitting as far as Romilly was concerned. "I made rather an ass of myself," he writes to his mother (11th November 1884),<sup>1</sup> "or rather other people made an ass of me, as I received a telegram from Lord Derby, giving me the limits of the protectorate and other information about it, while I was kept in utter ignorance that the commodore was coming up here with orders to hoist the flag himself. We therefore came up here and did it before the commodore arrived."

**A Second Proclamation.**—In due course Commodore Erskine arrived and he proclaimed the protectorate again on 6th November. At that very moment German agents were busy in the northern part of the island.

On 5th December the Ambassador in Berlin assured the German Government that Britain would respect the independence of Tonga and Samoa, and "did not contemplate any fresh arrangements in the Pacific Ocean pending the result of the negotiations agreed to between the two governments" (Granville to Sir E. Malet, 13th January 1885). Meanwhile orders had been given at the instance of the Colonial Office to extend the protectorate to the D'Entrecasteaux and any other small islands adjacent—a simple matter of rounding off the limits already declared.

**German Protectorate in North New Guinea.**—Before these orders could be put into effect H.M.S. *Swinger*, returning to Port Moresby from a cruise in the eastward islands, announced that she had met the German warships *Elisabeth*, *Marie*, and *Hyäne* in the harbour of Matupi, New Britain, and had learned from them of the hoisting of the German flag in New Guinea. Commodore Erskine, in a telegram on the 16th, said:—

"The captain of the *Elisabeth* states they have hoisted German flag on north coast of New Guinea from 141 meridian as far as Huon Gulf, including Admiralty, Hermit, Anchorite, New Britain and New Ireland groups."

Two days later the Ambassador at Berlin telegraphed to Granville stating that "Prince Bismarck had informed him that the German flag had been hoisted at three places on the north coast of New Guinea and at ten places in New Britain,

<sup>1</sup> *Letters from the Western Pacific*, by H. H. Romilly, 1893.



New Ireland, and Sable Land." It transpired that the annexations had already been accomplished when four days earlier (15th December) Count Munster informed Granville in conversation that "the annexation of a portion of New Guinea had placed Germany at a disadvantage, but the German Government took notice of the assurance of Her Majesty's Government that no further annexations would take place until after the proposed discussions as to the British and German spheres in the South Seas had taken place."

Before Derby had time to reply to the official notification of the German coup he was inundated with telegrams of protest from Australia. Some of these were couched in the warmest terms, complaining bitterly of the betrayal of Australian interests by the Imperial Government. The language was not without justification, for Derby, apparently unable to face the indignation of the colonies, had not yet informed them of the conversations which had taken place four months earlier, when Granville had consented to a German foothold in New Guinea.

Apart altogether from the Australian outcry, Derby at once demanded that the Foreign Office should protest against the action of Germany, and that the British protectorate should be extended to take in all that had not already been proclaimed as German, including Long Island, Rook Island, and the Louisiade group (Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 20th December 1884). He got his way on the latter point. The following day orders were given to join up with the German protectorate at Huon Bay, and two days later H.M.S. *Raven*, followed by the *Dart* and *Espiegle*, left Cooktown for the scene.

**The German Coup.**—It transpired that the *Hyäne* and *Elisabeth* left Sydney respectively on 23rd September and 16th October, whereas Plessen's protest against the limits of the British protectorate was delivered in London on 27th September. Derby naturally felt that in view of such a sharp action, taken before the meeting of the commission, the British Government was entitled to recover its freedom of action: hence his demand for extending the boundaries. (Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 31st December 1884).

In his official communication to the British Government on 26th December Count Munster wrote:—

"Since subjects of the German Empire have founded factories on the north coast of New Guinea lying east of the Netherlands



boundary and on the islands of the New Britain archipelago, and have become possessors of land by means of legal purchase (Kaufverträge) from the natives, the districts in question, under reservation of the rights of third parties, have been placed under the legal protection of His Majesty the Emperor and the German flag hoisted there in token of the annexation."

Munster added verbally that his Government did not consider the establishment of the protectorate prejudicial to the proposed commission to discuss the spheres of influence in the South Seas, "any more than the establishment of the British protectorate on the south-east coast could be so considered."

**An Angry Argument.**—Bismarck professed to believe that the contentious words "without prejudice," etc., gave Germany full latitude as regards the north coast of New Guinea. Granville's despatch of 13th January 1885, recapitulating the negotiations, is the commencement of an embittered controversy which lasted several weeks. Having, as they believed, arrived at a friendly understanding for deciding outstanding questions, the British Government was not prepared for the German annexation, and had only extended its own boundaries at a later date to obviate the inconvenience that might arise "from an absence of jurisdiction on the coast between the limits of the British and German protectorates."

On the following day the German Ambassador said there had been a misunderstanding as to the import of the note of 9th October, which his Government thought left them free to establish a protectorate on the north coast which would not interfere at all with the British on the south.

The German case was set forth in an *aide-mémoire* which went back as far as June, when an association of German subjects intimated to the Imperial Government that they were about to carry out on the north-east coast of New Guinea and in the archipelago of New Britain an undertaking which had been already in contemplation in the year 1880, but had been deferred under the impression produced by the refusal of the Samoan proposals. They had asked for the protection of the Government, which was granted, and "the German consular officers and naval commanders in the South Sea were, even at this early stage, empowered to place under the protection of His Majesty the Emperor the independent territories on the north coast of New Guinea as well as those in the archipelago of New Britain where German settlements existed or where acquisi-

tions of land had been effected by German subjects." Hence the overtures in August for an understanding.

**Britain Seizes Pawns.**—Germany's surprise proclamation a few weeks after Granville had made his concession of the Maclay coast left England no course but to seize upon the unappropriated districts and islands so as to enter the negotiations as the power in possession. Meade was well justified in his complaint to Granville, "The German Government have behaved very shabbily by you. Dr Busch has behaved equally ill to me."<sup>1</sup> From the dates of the sailings of the German warships the suggestion is that on hearing of the proposed limits of the British protectorate the German Government at once ordered the seizure of the remainder of the island and allowed its orders to go into execution in defiance of the clear understanding arrived at a few days later.

The colonies shared with Downing Street the fear that what Germany had done in New Guinea she would not hesitate to do elsewhere. New Zealand was especially anxious as to the future of Samoa, and begged to be allowed to send one of her steamers down to investigate the "national feeling" on the petition for annexation (Sir W. F. D. Jervois to Derby, 15th January 1885). Derby had the greatest difficulty in restraining the New Zealand Ministry, urged on by the ambitious Vogel, from taking the law into its own hands as Queensland had done the previous year.

For a week or two there was great excitement and much angry correspondence between the Antipodes, London, and Berlin. As far as the colonies were concerned it was mere beating the air. The questions at issue had to be decided in the light of interests very far from the Antipodes, and all they could do was to endeavour by protest after the event to pin the Colonial Office down to a more open and frank consideration of their interests in the future. There was a feeling that the German protectorate had been proclaimed in concert with the British authorities, and Derby was called upon to deny the charge. It was quite a natural result of keeping the colonies in ignorance of the conversations with Germany for six months after they were initiated.

**The Bismarck Conversations.**—What was in the mind of Germany throughout is disclosed in some measure by the now celebrated "Conversations at Berlin on Colonial Matters" (P.P. C. 4290). Mr R. H. Meade, Under-Secretary

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii., p. 376.

for the Colonies,<sup>1</sup> had gone to Berlin as a delegate to the conference on African affairs, and, in December, blissfully ignorant of what was occurring in the Pacific, he embarked upon a series of "unofficial and confidential" talks with Dr Busch, private secretary to Bismarck. It is idle to suppose that these were quite the unauthorised conversations which Meade represented them to be. He must obviously have had the authority of his chief for making suggestions which, if acceptable to Germany, must inevitably have been given effect to by Britain. The conversations were disclosed at a later date, and it was never possible to eradicate from the mind of Australasian statesmen the belief that they were undertaken with the intention, if expedient, of carrying out what Meade suggested.

The most important of Meade's interviews was with Bismarck himself on 24th December. "He received me kindly and our conversation lasted over an hour." On that occasion Bismarck explained that his principle in colonial policy was "to follow his traders when they established themselves on territory under no civilised jurisdiction and to afford them protection, not against competition by levying differential duties, but against direct aggression from without." After a long discussion, in which the Chancellor spoke bitterly of what he termed Britain's "girdling in" policy, especially in Africa, Meade mooted to him the scheme he had previously discussed with Busch "on which our mutual relations in Australasian waters might be satisfactorily adjusted." Bismarck said he had favoured the idea of having a group of islands to himself rather than "being mixed up with other people on the mainland" (New Guinea), but the German trading association had told him that whereas the New Britain group was of little value the north coast of New Guinea was especially valuable and had urged him to annex it. He had given the answer that he would merely afford protection where German trade was established, "and in consequence the flag had been hoisted on the north coast of New Guinea: and on hearing from us that we had taken the south coast he considered that the action could not be open to any objection whatever."

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert H. Meade, a son of the third Earl Clanwilliam, was born in 1835 and educated at Oxford. In 1863 he accompanied Granville to Germany, and in 1868 became his private secretary at the Colonial Office. In 1871 he was appointed Assistant Under-Secretary for the Colonies, in which capacity he was chiefly concerned with African affairs. It was for that reason that he went to Berlin to the African Conference in 1884.

He could not remember having seen the correspondence at all, and thought he was quite free to annex the north coast.

**Meade lectures Bismarck.**—Mr Meade's memorandum continues:—

"He then said that we had immense possessions in that part of the world, that we already had more land than we could colonise for years to come, that our navy was strong enough to protect those possessions, and that it was not worthy of us to grudge Germany a settlement on the coast of New Guinea, separated from Australia by the islands and the south shore which we had taken.

"I said that the population of our possessions in Australasia were counted in millions, and it was their fixed idea, however idle he might think it, that a foreign establishment on the mainland of New Guinea would be a source of danger. I said that Germany has an interest in the conciliation of Australasian opinion as she is developing her trade there, and is about to establish steam lines of communication. H.S.H. replied by asking if I really believed in this supposed strong feeling in Australia. I told him there could be no doubt of it whatever; that already we had heard that a bitter feeling of resentment against the Mother Country had been aroused, and that his own agents, I felt confident, would tell him the same story. . . . I asked him whether Germany would think of annexing land that was without value which she had just proposed should form the subject of special negotiations. He seemed displeased at this question, and rather sharply replied that that sort of question should be treated on general grounds of policy.

"Up to two years ago he had done everything he could to facilitate English policy in Egypt and elsewhere, but for some time past he has been treated in a different manner by England, whose actions do not accord with her professions. England was making no concession in Samoa, and those at Angra Pequena were valueless. Bismarck wound up with the remark: 'I do not find your proposals sufficient.'"

**Bartering Colonies.**—Meade's first interview with Busch took place on 6th December, and the latter was careful to explain later that he was not then aware that orders had been given to hoist the German flag in New Guinea. Meade asked Busch to remember that—

"A colonial government could not undertake annexations. I believe that much apprehension had been caused by too great readiness to accept the views expressed by a colonial minister as those of the Imperial Government."

It was then that he broached his own unhappy plan of adjustment. He said that England had found great in-



convenience in restricting her protectorate in New Guinea, and had eventually extended it to the German boundary because "the establishment of another power or of filibusters and escaped convicts from New Caledonia on the northern side of the narrow neck" would be especially dangerous to the British protectorate. Any unoccupied position would become an "Alsatia in which all crimes would be committed which the protectorate was designed to prevent. The establishment of our protectorate on the southern shore was only just in time to stop a scheme possessing exceptionally objectionable features which was to be carried out under the protection of a foreign flag."

What Meade put bluntly to Busch was this: England should take as much as she wished of New Guinea; Germany the sovereignty of the New Britain and New Ireland groups; Tonga and Samoa, "with any other quasi-civilised islands (if such there be) to be internationalised in some manner," it being suggested that the powers should mutually respect their independence. "I pointed out that this would give Germany perfect freedom to develop their commercial enterprise in Samoa should the German Parliament make the necessary appropriation. France to be allowed to take the New Hebrides group, which lie away from the others and would naturally fall into the New Caledonian system."

**Bismarck turns to France.**—When this conversation took place Germany had already to all intents and purposes taken possession of both northern New Guinea and the New Britain and New Ireland archipelago, so that Bismarck was in effect being asked to give up his New Guinea protectorate for no compensation whatever. When the conversations with Busch were resumed on the 14th the *flaggenhissung* was complete, but the talk commenced with a promise by Busch to ascertain whether there were any German establishments in New Guinea at all. So much for Meade's unhappy efforts.

The holiday season was marked by increasing warmth and irritation between London and Berlin, and an exchange of angry recriminations. Towards the end of January Sir E. Malet at Berlin had a conversation with Bismarck with a view to coming to some settlement of the differences. Again Bismarck complained bitterly of England's closing-in policy wherever Germany wished to establish a colony. He said he had valued very much the maintenance of good relations with England, but England seemed to have failed entirely to appreciate the importance which his Government



attached to the colonial question. In proof of this he read a despatch<sup>1</sup> which he had sent to Count Munster on 5th May 1884, in which he remarked that if a *rapprochement* could not be effected with England on the colonial question, "the result would be that Germany would seek from France the assistance which she had failed to obtain from England." He had even sent his son to England to endeavour to succeed where Count Munster had failed, but he too could only obtain "those general friendly assurances of goodwill which were of little value in the face of subsequent occurrences." He persisted that the contentious words in the note of 9th October gave him a free hand in northern New Guinea (Malet to Granville, 24th January 1885).

The British Ambassador finally asked what it was that Germany wanted at the moment. Was it parts of New Guinea, or was it Zululand? It was better that England should know his wishes than that they should go on mutually acting in the dark and running against each other.

"The Prince replied that the understanding which he had arrived at with France in consequence of his failure to come to one with us put it out of his power to take up the question now as he had expounded it to us in May."<sup>2</sup>

The argument was continued in London for some time longer. Munster maintained that he distinctly told Granville in August that "the whole independent part of the north coast" was the subject of "a German colonisation undertaking already in course of being carried out," and that in the same month orders were given to hoist the flag. It had been intended to take possession of the whole north coast, and Germany now entered her protest against the extension of the British protectorate to Huon Bay and asked for an understanding as to the inland boundaries.

**Healing the Breach.**—Events in Samoa, where Germany had just concluded a treaty overriding existing British rights, exacerbated the relations of the two countries. Germany complained that Britain had shown no disapproval of the action of some British subjects in prevailing on the king to sign a petition asking for British protection. Count Munster remarked truculently to Granville that Germany "counted on her exertions to bring about a condition of

<sup>1</sup> This despatch the British Government never saw. It is significant that while Bismarck claims it was delivered, the German *aide-mémoire* of 14th January traces the negotiations as beginning in June.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 4273.

order in these islands not being thwarted from other quarters" (28th January 1885).

Granville moved Malet on 7th February to endeavour to heal the breach with Bismarck by expressing the surprise and regret of the British Government that Germany should be conscious of "a political estrangement." He had never received the celebrated despatch of 5th May, and could only believe that the misunderstandings were "due to the suddenness with which Her Majesty's Government became acquainted with the departure by Germany from her traditional policy in regard to colonisation." Up to June he had believed that Bismarck himself was personally opposed to German colonisation, and the reports of Lord Amthill had always represented that he was "determined to combat and oppose the growing influence" of the shipping and commercial classes in that direction.

"I have never used any threat," Granville continued, "to obstruct the colonial policy of Germany, or conveyed anything more than the mere fact that the recent attitude of Germany as to Egypt had for the moment changed from the friendly one previously maintained towards this country. All my declarations in public and private, as well as those of Mr Gladstone and many of my colleagues, have been most favourable to German colonisation."

**Bismarck's Hostility to Granville.**—We get some indication in Lord Edward Fitzmaurice's life of Granville of the inner diplomacy which dictated the capitulation to German demands. In order to conciliate Germany in the matter of New Guinea, it was necessary "to run the risk of flouting the demands of British colonial opinion. Lord Granville, and still more Lord Derby, hesitated to do so, and in Mr Childers, whose own early career had been in Australia, Lord Derby found an active coadjutor. Mr Gladstone, however, dominated the situation with his own determined will. He saw that a choice had to be made, and recognised that the continued hostility of Germany was a danger greater than that of the irritation of the Australian colonists about New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. He therefore threw the whole weight of his influence into the scale of an agreement with concessions to Germany, notwithstanding his former dislike and suspicions, and the recent conduct of Prince Bismarck, which had gone far to justify them."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville*, by Lord Edward Fitzmaurice, vol. ii., pp. 430-1.

At a small dinner party at Lord Rosebery's house on 5th March, Bright, Rosebery, Gladstone, and Count Herbert Bismarck were present, and the conversation turned quite frankly on German colonisation. Count Bismarck is reported as saying: "We are the youngest of the great powers and we wish to undertake this function of colonisation, which belongs to a great power. But we only hope to do it in a very small and humble manner."

Gladstone, says Lord Fitzmaurice, was much impressed with the conversation, and on returning to the House of Commons he sat down and wrote to Granville insisting on a settlement of the New Guinea question. "It is really impossible," he wrote, "to exaggerate the importance of *getting out of the way the bar to the Egyptian settlement*. These words, strong as they are, are in my opinion words of truth and soberness, as, if we cannot wind up at once these small colonial controversies, we shall before we are many weeks older find out to our cost."<sup>1</sup>

Just ten days after this letter, Granville suggested to Count Munster that the boundary between British and German New Guinea should be from the point where the 8th parallel south crosses the north-eastern coast, and that as regards the interior a fair and equal division of the territory should be arrived at by means of a conventional line drawn from there to the Dutch boundary at 141 deg. E. On 25th April he suggested a specific line which gave an area of 67,000 square miles to Germany, and 63,000 to Great Britain, and which "nearly approached the water parting line, or natural boundary." This Germany had no hesitation in accepting, and thus the New Guinea dispute ended so far as England and Germany were concerned.<sup>2</sup>

The line runs from the coast-line at the 8th parallel, near Mitre Rock westward to the meridian of 147 deg. E.; thence north-westward to the intersection of the 6th parallel and the 144th meridian; thence west-north-westward to the Dutch boundary at the point of intersection of the 5th parallel south and the 141st meridian E.<sup>3</sup>

**Kaiser Wilhelmsland.**—The British colonists of Australia were still in ignorance of the arrangement come to with Germany when the German Government published its *Schutzbrief* for the administration of its new protectorate of Kaiser Wilhelmsland. The letter of protection was granted

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville*, by Lord Edward Fitzmaurice, vol. ii., pp. 430-1.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 4441.

<sup>3</sup> C. 4584.

to the same association of German subjects—the Neu-Guinea Kompagnie—which in August 1884 had been promised protection for its projected undertakings in New Guinea. It was stated that the company had “through an expedition fitted out by itself acquired and taken into occupation under control of our commission on the spot, harbours and portions of the coast with a view to cultivation and to the establishment of commercial stations, and that these districts were thereupon placed under our protection by our ships of war.” Two German firms which had erected factories and acquired territorial rights had joined the company, which now undertook to create such political institutions as would lead to the development and civilisation of the territory. By the letter of protection the Kaiser confirmed his assumption of authority and delegated to the company “the right to exercise territorial sovereignty under our sovereignty, with the exclusive right, under the supervision of our Government, of taking unclaimed land into occupation and disposing of it and concluding contracts with the natives respecting title to landed property.”<sup>1</sup>

The mainland portion of the protectorate was to be called Kaiser Wilhelm's Land and the insular portion the Bismarck Archipelago. The *Schutzbrief* was dated 17th May 1885, and was signed by “P. Wilhelm” and “v. Bismarck.”

Promptly the German administration advertised in the Australian press that future acquisitions of land without the consent of the Government were invalid but that older ones, if justly acquired, would be protected; that arms and spirits were not to be imported; and that native labourers should not be recruited except for the Bismarck archipelago, and then only under German control and for German plantations.

**The British Protectorate.**—The Australian colonies were still prepared to contribute to the cost of the New Guinea protectorate, but not to bear the whole expense, and Derby agreed that under the new conditions, whereby Germany was established in the neighbourhood, they could not be expected to do so. The German annexation, he remarked, might increase the obligations of the administration, whereas the duty of protecting the natives might reduce the local revenue, and the projected proclamation of full sovereignty would necessarily increase the cost of the establishment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4584: extract from *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22nd May 1885.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 5091.



Major-General Sir Peter Scratchley had been appointed in 1884 to be special commissioner in New Guinea, but when he came to discuss the matter of finance with the colonies he found himself faced by the difficulty that they were without any information as to what was intended to be done. There was a distinct note of complaint in the queries of the Agents-General in London that they had not been informed of developments with Germany, whereas what purported to be the whole agreement had been published throughout Germany. Derby had to admit that what had been stated in Germany was substantially correct, and he then proceeded (25th May 1885) to advise the colonies by cable.<sup>1</sup> It was only on 11th June that the Colonial Office admitted to the Admiralty that it had been agreed to withdraw from Rook and Long Islands, and on the 19th the boundaries were at length published in the *London Gazette*.

**Derby goes out of Office.**—In June Derby went out of office, and it remained for his successor, Colonel Stanley, to make the best arrangements he could with the colonies for the administration of New Guinea. He agreed to the proclamation of full sovereignty if the colonies would contribute £15,000 a year towards the cost and any extra expenditure which they might approve. The Imperial Government proposed to make their initial contribution in the form of a suitable ship, which would cost £18,000.

It was some years before the sovereignty was proclaimed, the Colonial Office contending that the defence of Australia was fully secured by the protectorate, and that the settlement of New Guinea could not benefit the Mother Country at all. If the colonies persisted in asking for full sovereignty they would have to make financial provision.<sup>2</sup>

The matter hung fire until the Colonial Conference in London in 1887. The new Secretary of State (Sir Henry Holland) then met the representatives from Australia in a conciliatory spirit, saying that they wished the past to be buried, and that they would be glad to assist the colonies in the establishment of the first sovereignty in New Guinea. He proposed that the colonies should make provision for an annual sum of £15,000 for the cost of the administration, and should also secure the natives against the alienation of their lands and improper treatment. The scheme of administration was based on proposals of Sir Samuel Griffith (Queensland). The Secretary of State impressed upon the colonies the "certain amount of responsibility" which the Government

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4584.

<sup>2</sup> C. 5883.



was assuming when the expenses were only provided for ten years to come; but, he added, "Her Majesty's Government have full confidence in the clear understanding, I think I may call it, of the colonial governments that they are prepared to relieve this country of the charges of the administration." The administration was to have power to legislate, but before doing so should take its instructions from the Governor of Queensland, who in turn should consult his Cabinet.<sup>1</sup> Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria undertook to guarantee £10,000 a year for ten years as a condition of sovereignty being proclaimed, and Queensland made herself responsible for the amount.

**Sovereignty Proclaimed.**—On 8th June 1888 letters-patent were issued erecting New Guinea into a separate possession. By Article XII. it is expressly provided that a law should be enacted making illegal any purchases of land by private persons except through the administrator or officers of the Government. The administrator had to communicate with the Governor of Queensland on all matters and to report everything to him.

The first administrator, whose commission was dated 9th June, was Dr (now Sir) William MacGregor, C.M.G., and he proclaimed the sovereignty at Port Moresby on 4th September. Like his predecessor the special commissioner, he was instructed "to promote to the utmost of his power religion and education among the native inhabitants of the possession." His tenure of office, which lasted till 1899, was a conspicuously successful one.<sup>2</sup>

**Australia takes over the Possession.**—Even before the federation of Australia Chamberlain pressed upon the colonies the duty of taking over the whole responsibility of governing New Guinea. He insisted that as it was certain that the territory would have to be developed by Australian enterprise and capital, the Australian people should shoulder the whole burden. They were on the spot. They had unlimited command of capital. They took more kindly to the tropical life than the British. They had a direct interest in New Guinea trade. He did not object to the

<sup>1</sup> C. 5091.

<sup>2</sup> Sir William MacGregor was born in Scotland in 1847 and educated at Aberdeen and Glasgow Universities. He first joined the Colonial Office as medical officer at Seychelles and became chief medical officer at Fiji in 1875, afterwards becoming Receiver-General and acting High Commissioner. He was Administrator of New Guinea from 1888 to 1895 and then Lieut.-Governor, and was afterwards Governor of Lagos, Newfoundland, and Queensland; K.C.M.G. 1889; G.C.M.G. 1907.

continuance of the existing arrangement for a time, but, he added,

“I feel that as the Australian colonies will reap all the direct and immediate benefit from the development of the territory, I am unable to recommend that any further Imperial grants should be made towards New Guinea.”

The United Kingdom had, indeed, continued contributing longer than she had expected to do (Chamberlain to Hopetoun, 8th June 1898).<sup>1</sup>

Owing to the imminence of federation, the question was held up in Australia, and this letter was not replied to until 1900. The first Commonwealth Ministry would neither assume responsibility nor find the money, unless the territory was placed completely under Australian control. Otherwise it was suggested that it should be turned into a Crown colony and administered from Downing Street.

Chamberlain would not hear of it. He was willing to give Australia complete control even to the extent of appointing all the administrative officers, and he “most earnestly hoped” in the interests of New Guinea that it would be taken over immediately by the Commonwealth, or by Queensland pending the conclusion of a new agreement. He would not allow the matter to be held up any longer. Barton agreed to put the matter to Parliament, and in its first session a resolution was carried by the House of Representatives agreeing to find the money, estimated at not less than £20,000 a year,<sup>2</sup> for the administration of New Guinea as a territory of the Commonwealth.

In March 1902 the necessary letters-patent were issued, and by the Papua Act 1905 the Commonwealth accepted responsibility for the territory. Since 1st September 1906 Papua has been under the administration of the Commonwealth.

**The Territory of Papua.**—The native population of Papua is estimated to number about half a million. Though it has not yet reached the stage of financial solvency, the territory gives promise of great wealth. The revenue, chiefly from customs, was £15,114 in 1901 and £51,961 in 1915; and the expenditure rose from £32,089 to £82,535 in the same period. The chief items of expenditure are public works, sanitation, police, and the Government vessel.

The recruiting of native labour in the territory is care-

<sup>1</sup> P.P. Aust. 1901-2, vol. ii., p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Parl. Debates, Aust. Sess., 1901-2, vol. i., 19th November 1901.

fully safeguarded, and it is almost exclusively for public works. The acquisition of land has also been controlled for the benefit of the native owners. The Polynesian chief system being unknown amongst the Papuans, efforts were made to build up a form of native government based on patriarchal authority, but it was found that this did not extend beyond the family, and since then control over the natives has been best effected through a system of village police. The central authority has a body of about 250 armed native constabulary, enlisted from all districts. The general law of Papua is the same as in Queensland.

**Dutch New Guinea.**—Until the eighties Holland took a very lukewarm interest in the development of her possession in New Guinea. In fact, the Netherlands Government hesitated to grant licenses for working guano on shoals in the neighbourhood of the Dutch protectorate, relinquishing the authority to Great Britain and the United States. For many years Holland did little more than send a succession of civil servants to administer the government. Even the exploration of the hinterland was left to scientists of British, Italian, and German nationality.

The boundaries of the British and Dutch possessions were fixed by convention at the Hague in 1895, making a slight deviation in favour of Great Britain of the hitherto accepted line of the 141st meridian, so as to bring the whole course of the great Fly River into British territory. The navigation is, however, free for both powers except for warlike stores.<sup>1</sup>

Dutch New Guinea forms part of the residency of Ternate, in the Moluccas, and is not yet extensively developed. The present system of government was established in 1902.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 7834.

## CHAPTER IX

### SAMOA TO 1885

**The Navigators Islands.**—No small group has seen more troublous times, due almost entirely to the intrusion of European powers, than Samoa, or Navigators Islands.

It is a small group consisting of four main and a number of minor islands, with an aggregate area of 1701 square miles, and it lies centrally in Polynesia (lat. 14 deg. S.: long. 169 to 173 deg. W.). Apia, the capital of Upolu, is 1575 miles north-east of Auckland, and 614 miles east-north-east of Levuka in Fiji. The two largest islands, Upolu and Savaii, were occupied by Germany at the settlement of 1899, and Tutuila, the most easterly one, by the United States.

Samoa was discovered by Bougainville in 1768, and was named the Navigators from the superior construction of the native boats. La Perouse visited the group in 1788 and Kotzebue in 1824.

Christianity first found its way into Samoa through the medium of native converts from Tonga, in 1828-9. It gradually spread, and in 1835 the first Wesleyan missionaries landed, to find in Upolu and Savaii a body of at least 2000 Methodists. In 1839, under an arrangement with the Missionary Committee in London, the Wesleyans agreed to leave the group, where they had 13,000 adherents. Work was resumed in 1857 by the Australasian Conference.

**Foreign Commercial Interests.**—British interests arose in Samoa in a typically British way. Traders, planters, and whalers, the unofficial pioneers of the British race, settled near the "beaches" in the wake of the British missionaries. There was no organisation of their settlement, and no State protection, either actual or promised.

German interests, trading interests pure and simple, made their appearance in Samoa late in the fifties, the most important being (as stated above on p. 97) those of the Hamburg shipping firm of John Cæsar Godeffroy & Son.

Their trading station was founded at Apia somewhere about 1857. Far-seeing, industrious, and unscrupulous, they pushed their interests so vigorously that by 1871 the German Imperial Government considered Apia the most important centre of German influence in the Pacific and stationed a consul there. The first consul was the agent of the Godeffroy house, and he showed more energy and soon exercised a great deal more power than either of his seniors, the British and American consuls.

**The Vogel Scheme.**—The vigour of German activity in the seventies pointed directly to the creation of a German policy of which the other powers would have to take account. The Colonial Treasurer of New Zealand, Mr (after Sir Julius) Vogel, had taken up the mantle worn by Sir George Grey during his first governorship of the colony, when he outlined for the Imperial Government a scheme of a Pacific federation which should bring all the islands under British rule. Vogel interposed more than once in the discussion in the sixties on the cooling relations of the Mother Country and the colonies, and he put forward both in New Zealand and in London proposals for taking in hand the derelict islands of the Pacific, which might at a later date become troublesome bases of foreign influence.

In his memorandum of 5th April 1876, Vogel laid stress on the danger of allowing any foreign power to occupy the Navigators, but he recognised that a demand for annexation would have to be accompanied by an offer to pay the cost.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately the mere hint thrown out by Vogel defeated his purpose. Within a year or two German agents had concluded a treaty which effectually prevented the islands ever coming under British sovereignty.

Samoa was specifically mentioned in the Pacific Islands Order-in-Council of 1877 as being subject to the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner, and a Deputy Commissioner for Samoa was appointed in 1878. This meant merely that British subjects were amenable to the High Commissioner's Court, and that undesirable persons could be removed from the group.

**The German and American Treaties.**—In April 1877 the German consular and naval authorities negotiated with the native legislative authorities (the Taimua and Faipule) with the double object of securing German interests in the group, and the recognition of Germany's equal rights in the event of treaties being concluded with other powers. By a protocol

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 1566.



signed on 3rd July, the chambers agreed in the event of a native war to neutralise the region of Mulinuu, where the Germans held much property, and to strike the Samoan flag there to protect German property, and not to grant preferential privileges to any other power.<sup>1</sup> The letter of the German consul (Th. Weber, the agent for Godeffroy & Son) and of the naval captain prohibited Samoa from accepting the protection of any other power.

A few months later, on 17th January 1878, a treaty was concluded with the United States assuring the Republic most-favoured-nation treatment. By Article II. it was provided :—

“Naval vessels of the United States shall have the privilege of entering and using the port of Pagopago and establishing therein and on the shores thereof a station for coal and other naval supplies for their naval and commercial marine, and the Samoan Government will hereafter neither exercise nor authorise any jurisdiction within the said port adverse to such rights of the United States, or restrictive thereof. The same vessels shall also have the privilege of entering other ports of the Samoan Islands. The citizens of the United States shall likewise have free liberty to enter the same ports with their ships and cargoes of whatsoever kind, and to sell the same to any of the inhabitants of those islands, whether natives or foreigners, or to barter them for the products of the islands.”

No import or export duties were to be levied on American goods.<sup>2</sup>

Pagopago, in the island of Tutuila, the best harbour in Samoa, was selected on the recommendation of Captain Meade, of the U.S. warship *Narragansett*, a few years earlier as a suitable port of call for the American trans-Pacific steamers. The harbour was actually transferred to the United States by a deed executed on the American steamer *Adams* on 5th August of the same year.<sup>3</sup>

By Article V., the United States agreed to offer her good offices in case of any difference between Samoa and any other power. This the Germans at once seized upon as an infringement of the assurances given to them that no foreign nation would be granted preferential privileges. Here was the germ of a protectorate; and the German consul demanded satisfaction of the Taimua and Faipule.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5629.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Sen. Docs. 61st Congress, II. Sess., vol. xlviii., No. 357.

<sup>3</sup> P.P., C. 5629, p. 293.

Not getting any, they seized the ports of Saluafata and Fulealili as security for the conclusion of a treaty which should give Germany most-favoured-nation treatment in view of the American agreement. Such a treaty was eventually exacted from Samoa on 24th January 1879. With the grant of a naval and coaling station was coupled the promise not to give to any other nation such rights as had been given to Germany. No taxes or duties were to be levied on German ships.

**Germany's Pre-Colonial Attitude.**—This was in Germany's pre-colonial days. Bismarck's aversion to colonial policies still held sway, and in presenting the treaty to the Reichstag Herr von Bülow carefully explained that Germany had no intention of founding a colony or securing a monopoly in Samoa. Her sole object was to ensure as far as possible that German shipping and commerce should have full and equal rights with their competitors.

It was a disturbing document nevertheless, and created so much uneasiness amongst the British residents that the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific proceeded to the spot at the first opportunity with the object of making an agreement with the authorities for parallel privileges for British subjects. This treaty was signed on 28th August 1879, Malietoa and Saga signing on behalf of Samoa. By Article VIII. Great Britain was granted the privilege, if she thought fit, of establishing on the shores of a Samoan harbour, "to be hereafter designated by Her Majesty, a naval station and coaling depot," provided it should not be in any of the harbours selected by the other two powers.<sup>1</sup>

A few days later the High Commissioner concerted with the German and American authorities a convention for the government of the town and district of Apia, where most of the foreign residents were located.<sup>2</sup> It provided for a municipal board consisting of the consuls of the powers who had entered into treaty relations and those whom other nations might appoint in the future, and exercising the usual municipal powers, including that of levying the necessary rates up to 5 per cent. on the valuation of houses or land. A magistrate was to be appointed by the board, and the subjects of the powers should be amenable to his jurisdiction. Territorial integrity was "in no way prejudiced," and the Samoan flag was to be hoisted over the meeting house of the board. In case of civil war both town and district should be neutral. The convention was made for four

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 2747.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 2748.

years, at the expiry of which period, if the internal condition of Samoa justified it, the town and district should again pass under the control of the Samoan Government.

**An Unhappy Experiment.**—German influence had long been very strong in Samoa, as was evident from the case of Colonel Steinberger. Returning in 1875 from a visit to Hamburg he persuaded the chambers to elect Malietoa king, and he himself was appointed prime minister. This government broke up in 1876, and at the instance of the king and the American consul Steinberger was deported. Shortly afterwards his friends deposed the king, and set up the government which concluded the German-Samoan treaty.

It was after the restoration of Malietoa that the British treaty was concluded, Sir Arthur Gordon having satisfied himself, on the authority of the consuls and naval officers of England, Germany, and the United States, that his was entitled to recognition as the *de facto* government. Malietoa was proclaimed and anointed in May 1879. He died at the close of the following year, and Malietoa Laupepa was appointed king.

The arrangement for the government of Apia proved an unhappy one. All the elements afterwards discovered to be so inharmonious soon asserted themselves, and the native factions became a part of the general intrigue. So that when the time came for revising the instrument in 1883, the powers were unanimously of opinion that affairs could not be handed back to the native government. Nor did the native government wish to resume them.<sup>1</sup> It was already convinced of its helplessness in the maelstrom around it.

**New Zealand's Anxiety.**—The development of troubles in Samoa was viewed with most anxiety in New Zealand. None of the other colonies had any intercourse with Samoa. New Zealand was the nearest of them all, and had the largest trade. But she had also, in her native population, the branch of the Polynesian race most closely related to the Samoans. Malietoa in his troubles had already turned to her for sympathy and advice, and was in correspondence with that veteran friend of native races, Sir George Grey. Grey was now advanced in years, but he still had much influence in the colony, and he introduced and carried through Parliament a bill to enable New Zealand to amalgamate by federation any of the island races of the Pacific who should wish for such a union. The bill so

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4276.

evidently contained the seeds of international trouble in the case of Samoa itself that the Imperial Government withheld its assent.

But Grey was not by any means the only New Zealander interested in the welfare of Samoa. While his bill was before the House of Representatives an ex-Member of Parliament paid a visit to Samoa and seems to have prepared the ground there for annexation, to the great annoyance of Bismarck, while another member drew up a form of petition to the same effect. The High Commissioner for the Western Pacific (Sir G. W. Des Voeux) pointed out to the New Zealand Government the serious result such a movement might have in reviving civil war in Samoa, and incidentally went out of his way to favour the claims of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

“Whether the annexation of Samoa to New Zealand be desirable or not,” he wrote to the Governor of New Zealand, “it is to be borne in mind that it would not probably be sanctioned without the previous consent of Germany, which has interests in the islands considerably greater than those of any other power, and which deserves special consideration as having afforded for years past the principal protection to all white settlers by keeping ships of war almost continually in Samoan waters. As Germany is not a colonising power, it is not impossible that her Government might regard with favour the annexation of these islands by England in the assurance that the possession of the private property of German subjects would be thereby guaranteed. But however this may be, a disposition of this kind is not likely to be induced by an agitation which places in immediate peril interests which have hitherto been preserved at so heavy a sacrifice.”

He appealed to New Zealand to check the movement, but the Premier disclaimed all responsibility for or knowledge of the proceedings, which had obviously been inaugurated by a number of Auckland politicians on their own initiative (Memo. by Sir H. Atkinson, 12th November 1883).<sup>2</sup>

**The Proposed Conference.**—At the end of 1883 the Intercolonial Convention met in Sydney, but its attention was almost entirely devoted to the New Guinea affair. The great majority of the delegates were Australians, and their interest in Samoa was quite overshadowed by the more pressing importance of the large island at their doors, and the rebuff to their aspirations by the repudiation of the Queensland annexation.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 3863.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



New Zealand acted complacently for a while, and the Samoa agitation hung fire, but when the German annexation in New Guinea became known she could no longer be restrained. The governor (Sir W. F. D. Jervois) had informed the Colonial Office in August that he did not think there was a great body of opinion behind the Pacific policy of New Zealand, but he was soon to change his mind. A new Government came into office in September which included both Vogel and Stout. Vogel's views were known beyond any question; and Stout backed them up in their entirety.

In November the New Zealand Parliament agreed to pay its share of the New Guinea expenses, and two days later the governor cabled his Ministry's demand that in the forthcoming negotiations in Europe both Samoa and Tonga should be secured to New Zealand,<sup>1</sup> that colony bearing the cost of their annexation. Taking alarm at the conjuncture of rumours about Samoa, Bismarck complained of the bad impression they created in Germany on the eve of the proposed conference, and asked for an assurance that Britain had no intention of annexing the islands. The assurance was at once given by the British Government as regards both Tonga and Samoa. at the very moment when Germany was hoisting her flag in New Guinea (Granville to Malet, 4th December 1884).

**Annexation Movement annoys Bismarck.**—At that time the king and chiefs of Samoa were actually preparing a spontaneous petition for annexation to the British Crown, and two days after the promise had been made to Germany, the Colonial Office received a cabled copy of the petition from New Zealand. The foreign and colonial ministers had agreed to inform New Zealand that foreign interests in Samoa precluded the British Government accepting the sovereignty, and that Germany had requested that no steps should be taken affecting her interests. This was not altogether frank. It withheld the comprehensive promise that had been made to Germany a week earlier, namely, that England would respect the independence of both groups.

Germany had asked the British Government to express its disapproval of the movements for annexation in Tonga and Samoa, and the request had been acceded to, but before the reply could reach either Berlin or Samoa the smooth tenor of the negotiations was rudely disturbed by the disclosure of the German annexations in New Guinea.

<sup>1</sup> Jervois to Derby, 19th November 1884: P.P., C. 4273.



New Zealand was genuinely alarmed and annoyed at the apparent passivity of Downing Street. Despite remonstrances she was determined on taking her own action. Assured that the latest petition of the chiefs was a genuine one, as indeed it was, the Ministry declared itself ready to assume the cost of annexing both Tonga and Samoa, and to take over the government of Fiji. Pending the receipt of a reply from the Colonial Office, it was proposed to send the Government steamer *Hinemoa* to Samoa with the Colonial Secretary himself on board "to accurately ascertain Samoan feeling" (Jervois to Derby, 31st December 1884).

**Colonial Office restrains New Zealand.**—This message, coming in the midst of a welter of trouble and perplexity, almost stampeded the Colonial Office. Granville's anxiety not to offend the Germany that had made these clandestine annexations paralysed Derby, who was all for taking action. Until he knew whether Germany's other assurances were binding he objected strongly to giving the warning to Samoa which Granville had promised in ignorance of what Germany had been doing. Granville insisted, and the Samoan chiefs were warned. Derby had no course open to him but to inform New Zealand that the steps she proposed to take might give Germany justification for herself annexing Samoa. As a last resource he said he hoped it would be possible to arrange for the internationalisation of Samoa, if New Zealand's action did not preclude this (Derby to Jervois, 3rd January 1885).

Meanwhile news reached New Zealand that in the presence of two German cruisers the chiefs had signed a treaty practically handing over their country to Germany for a period of five years. In face of this it was decided to give up the expedition to Samoa, and to that extent Downing Street breathed freely once more (Jervois to Derby, 6th January 1885).

**The Isolation of Samoa.**—It was a very curious position Samoa was not connected with the world by cable, and it had a very infrequent mail service, so that it was practically cut off from the outside world for weeks at a time. This alone produced a ferment of intrigue on the spot. Ignorant of what was happening in Berlin, and far from authority which might curb their intrepidity, the German officials lost no opportunity of furthering the supposed interests of their fatherland, and they pushed their intrigues with high-handed insistence in order to forestall any possible advantage accruing to the other powers.

Late in October the German consul began with a certain degree of deliberation to pick a quarrel with the Samoan Government over a land claim at Mulinuu, the seat of government. A German warship had arrived fresh from her triumphs in New Guinea, and the Samoans believed that in view of the petition which they were known to have sent to England a year earlier the Germans intended to force through a treaty giving them control of the affairs of the country, if not actually annexing it. They were very much alarmed, and discussed the matter with the British consul with such embarrassing freedom that, he writes: "I had to abruptly dismiss them for, becoming excited, they commenced a conversation that I could not listen to in this consulate, such as they would all fight any one who hoisted any other flag than the British flag over them, and that they would all like to see flying over them." They evinced a strong pro-British sentiment, and the consul suspected them of a design to hoist the British flag themselves if the German menace became more serious (W. B. Churchward to Consul-General, 28th October 1884).

On 5th November the king and chiefs drew up the new petition asking for British protection, leaving it entirely to the discretion of the Queen whether Samoa should be a Crown colony or attached to New Zealand. "Our hearts are grieved," they said, "and our fear is very great indeed with regard to the governments who desire to take possession of our government, which is not according to our wish. Therefore we entreat your Majesty that you will speedily come to our assistance." A letter was sent to the Government of New Zealand asking them to forward the petition with their recommendation. It was a month before the documents reached New Zealand, only 1600 miles away, and the Colonial Office received advice on 6th December.

But long ere this a mercenary scribe sold the secret document to the German consul for a few dollars, and, reinforced by another warship, the German officials browbeat the unhappy islanders, and forced through a new treaty of far greater import.

**A Treaty under Duress.**—Malietoa and his rival Tamasese composed their jealousies and compounded their sorrow to receive together the instrument by which they were ordered to sign away the last shred of Samoan independence. It was concluded on 10th November and by establishing a German-Samoan Council, or *Staatsrath*, it practically delivered up the country to the Germans. The full text of this treaty

reached the Colonial Office on the very day, 8th January, on which it was decided to defer to Bismarck's wish that the Samoan people should be ordered to cease their agitation for annexation to New Zealand.

The New Zealand Cabinet was dismayed and angry. "My ministers feel aggrieved," Jervois telegraphed, "that although the Colonial Office wired that the representations of my Government would be fully considered, assurances were exchanged between England and Germany that the independence of Samoa would be respected." The Foreign Office intimated to Germany that it relied on no treaty being ratified that might be inconsistent with the assurances exchanged.

It was two weeks before Bismarck replied. In the interim New Zealand claimed that as the Samoan petition made a suggestion of annexation to New Zealand it was "their duty and right to visit Samoa and themselves ascertain the national feeling." The commodore had already sent a ship, and the New Zealand Government should be allowed to do the same (Jervois to Derby, 15th January 1885). Derby replied in desperation that "there was no question here respecting national feeling" and consequently no need for a colonial inquiry. He implored patience, as Bismarck had made a speech admitting that the agreement was binding, and anything New Zealand might do would look like a breach and might "lead to immediate German annexation."

When Bismarck did reply, the Colonial Office could no longer doubt that he was behind the most aggressive acts of his representatives. He completely endorsed the action of the consul and the cruiser captain, and justified the new treaty as a normal development of the German-Samoan Treaty of 1879. Count Munster contended that what had been done was well within the limits of the German-Samoan Treaty, and encroached neither on the independence of the group nor on the rights of other nations. Moreover, he added almost defiantly, "the German Government has the intention of ratifying this agreement, taking care that its stipulations also shall be strictly observed on the part of the Samoanese. They count on their exertions to bring about a condition of order in these islands not being thwarted from other quarters."

**The Staatsrath.**—The German-Samoan Council of State, or Staatsrath, was to consist of the consul, two Samoans, and two Germans nominated by him. It was to legislate for the

common interests of Germans and Samoans. The ordinances were to be under the hand of the king (Article III.), who, in concert with the German consul, was to appoint a German officer of the Samoan Government as secretary and counsellor of the king in all matters concerning German residents (Article IV.). He was to have charge of the prison and control the police officials, who also should be appointed by the king in conjunction with him.

Criticising the arrangement, the Colonial Office observed that a council in which Germans alone were represented gave Germany a preponderance inevitably injurious to Great Britain, and as the latter could not accept a position of less influence, it would apparently be necessary under the most-favoured-nation clause of the Treaty of 1879 to demand a similar agreement for Great Britain. Otherwise Germany alone would be accorded a power to which Granville objected in 1880 as being "too great an interference with the island government" to be assumed jointly by the three treaty powers.

**Dr Stuebel hoists the German Flag.**—While the matter was being discussed in Europe Dr Stuebel, the German consul, suddenly on 23rd January hoisted the German flag at Mulinnu and Apia, and addressed a proclamation to the people saying that this was done on account of the wrongdoing of the Government, and that it signified that Germany would rule for the present over that portion of the country. "It is no unkindness at all to Samoa. The German Government only wish for Samoa to have a strong government which shall maintain cordial relations with the Government of Germany."

The protests of the British and American consuls were bootless. A few days later Malietoa and his Government were expelled from their seat of government by a guard of marines.

**Excitement in New Zealand.**—Jervois's despatch (31st January 1885)<sup>1</sup> gives an interesting insight into the anxiety which was felt in New Zealand—an anxiety, apparently, which the governor himself was late to share. The leading ministers believed it advisable to visit Samoa at once, especially as Parliament had already voted a sum of money for Pacific steamer lines. Jervois was about to leave for a remote part of the colony, but when the Premier (Stout) made the matter appear urgent he willingly placed the Government steamer at their disposal, merely remarking

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4584.



that there "appeared to be weighty objections to sending her to Samoa with a minister on board."

It is an amazing fact that when Jervois received from Samoa first the king's petition and then his appeal to the New Zealand Government he did not even mention the fact to his ministers, but took the unthinkable step of forwarding them to the Colonial Office without their knowledge. In face of the fact that his parliament had just debated the subject exhaustively and passed committing resolutions, it is astonishing that he should have been so little impressed by the documents. He only seems to have recalled their existence when the Premier and the Colonial Secretary had left again for the seat of government; and he then transmitted them to the ministers by telegraph.

**The Threatened Descent on Samoa.**—Convinced at last that his ministers were in earnest, Jervois proceeded hastily to Wellington and tried to dissuade them. The presence of the Government steamer, he said, would probably lead to complications with foreign men-of-war and might even be misunderstood by the High Commissioner, as it was an intrusion into his jurisdiction without Imperial authority. Again the matter was referred to England. Again Derby refused permission.

It was hard for Stout to comply with a good grace, for news had just come to hand of the action of the two German cruisers and the forced treaty of protection. The text of the treaty was cabled to the Colonial Office at a cost to the colony of £400.

On 9th January Jervois himself received a letter from Malietoa explaining the circumstances of the treaty and praying that an early British annexation might annul it. The impatience of the Ministry to take its own measures broke out again, and in the absence of the governor from Wellington they cabled to Derby asking permission to send a mission to Malietoa, and "perhaps to make a similar convention to that made by Germany."

Again Jervois sent his own cabled disapproval to the Colonial Office. The Colonial Office had had a cruiser sent to Samoa, but the New Zealand Cabinet, impatient of the duel which had developed between itself and the governor, claimed its "duty and right" to find out the facts on the spot. It was then that Derby said: "As there is no question here respecting national feeling Samoa no ground for colonial inquiry."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4273, p. 88.



Having thus carried out his duty to the Colonial Office, Jervois told Derby frankly that he believed the annexation of Tonga and Samoa in some form or other most desirable in the interests of all concerned and the only alternative to anarchy. How strongly the Cabinet felt on the question is evident from Stout's speech<sup>1</sup> at Dunedin, in which he said that what New Zealand feared was the creation of centres of foreign aggression in the Pacific which would be used against the colonies in future wars.

It was Granville now who urged that England and Germany should proceed to the conference without delay. The creation of the Staatsrath, he said, placed British subjects at a disadvantage, and the enrolment of a German police prevented the Samoan Government from acting independently in matters affecting the whole community. The only hopeful sign at the moment was the promptitude with which Bismarck, on hearing of Stuebel's "flaggenhissung," assured the British Government that he had no intention of sanctioning the annexation or protectorate, but would adhere strictly to the terms of the understanding (Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 9th February 1885). Yet so strangely remote was the scene of all the turmoil, that the German consul was able two months later to claim that his act had been officially approved<sup>2</sup> (Churchward to Granville, 9th April 1885). On 22nd May the New Zealand Government complained that the flag was still flying, and that the experience of Raiatea seemed likely to be repeated.

**No Hope of Annexation.**—Derby and Granville had quite made up their minds that there could be annexation, and the New Zealand Government must have guessed this long before they were informed of the official understanding of December between Germany and Great Britain.

They seem first to have heard of this agreement when it was six months old. Derby wrote (15th April 1885) that apart from the understanding it was impossible to avoid the conclusion that the extent of German interests in Samoa precluded annexation by Great Britain except with the full concurrence of Germany. The German residents and the volume of German trade both preponderated over British—indeed the trade was almost double—and New Zealand would appreciate the importance both to Australasia and to the rest of the Empire "of recognising frankly the good claims of a great friendly power, and of co-operating effectively with Germany in the protection and development of

<sup>1</sup> 21st January 1885: P.P., C. 4584, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 4584.

European trade in those places in which either country has such established interests, as may preclude the establishment within it of the sovereignty of the other."

The British Government was largely guided in this decision by the report of Captain A. C. Bridge, R.N., of H.M.S. *Espiegle*, which showed that in July 1884 the numbers of foreign residents in Samoa were as follows:—

German . . . . .	145
British . . . . .	138
American . . . . .	80

The British numbers were, however, largely augmented by the thirteen missionaries and their families.

The decision in itself was not open to serious criticism, except in so far as successive governments had led the Samoan people to look to England for protection against German aggression, just as thirty years earlier they had the people of Tahiti. Owing to the despatches being withheld for some months after the negotiations came to an end, the statesmen of Australia and New Zealand never understood the reasons which had actuated the British Government, and the Colonial Office, in the Samoa affair as in that of New Guinea, never took the colonies into its confidence. The understanding with Germany regarding the independence of Samoa was withheld just as the conversations regarding New Guinea were withheld. When the publication of the correspondence eventually disclosed the course of the negotiations, it did not appear at all creditable to British statesmen. The statesmen of the colonies may have been convinced that England had done the best she could under very difficult circumstances, but the people of the colonies never read the correspondence, and to a great extent they have ever since harboured the memory of the "treachery" of Downing Street. In any case, either for statesmen or public, it is inconceivable that matters so gravely affecting the future of the colonies can ever again be decided in discussions from which they are entirely excluded.

## CHAPTER X

### SAMOA SINCE 1885

**The Thurston-Krauel Commission.**—Dr Krauel and Mr J. B. Thurston sat for some time as a commission to endeavour to find a solution of the troubles in Samoa, but they were quite unable to devise a feasible scheme by which, with the existing native government, the British and Germans could be on an equal footing. The only possible suggestion was the formation of an Anglo-Samoan state council similar to the German-Samoan, and this, even as a last resort, Thurston would not recommend.

Both agreed that the best thing for Samoa would be the assumption of the administration of the native government by one of the treaty powers, the sovereignty of the king and the independence of the state remaining intact. It was recommended that Germany, Britain, and the United States should agree on the policy under which this should be carried out. Another suggestion was the reconstruction of the native government on the lines of a Crown colony, or of the original government of Hawaii, part of the government being natives and part Samoan. But in this case the Germans claimed the nomination of two of the four members of the council, one being appointed by the British and one by the Americans.

Thurston strongly advised making a frank recognition of Germany's preponderating position as the best means of reaching an understanding. But nothing came of the negotiations, and 1885 passed away with no abatement of the discord and misery which had now become chronic in the group.

In Europe things began to look more hopeful in 1886. When Rosebery came to the Foreign Office one of his first callers was the German Ambassador, bewailing the continued friction in Samoa, and suggesting that it would be better

for all parties if a single power could take control.<sup>1</sup> Rosebery had received an important despatch from Des Voeux emphasising Germany's claim to preference, and affirming his belief that the best hopes for the future of Samoa lay in German annexation.<sup>2</sup>

Rosebery could not, of course, go so far at a single step, and he informed Count Plessen rather sharply that there were other powers interested in Samoa besides Britain and Germany. A few weeks later, however, he threw out a suggestion for a joint investigation by man-of-war captains. Bismarck accepted the suggestion, but desired that the inquiry should be by civilians, and he took upon himself not only to nominate his own representative, Herr Travers, the consul-general at Sydney, whom he described as "one of the most conciliatory and able men in the consular service," but also to hope that England would appoint Mr Thurston, "whose impartial character and great knowledge of local questions" had greatly impressed Dr Krauel.

**Developments in Samoa.**—In Samoa the hauling down of his flag by the Germans had quite destroyed the prestige of Malietoa, and Tamasese entertained high hopes that in the chaos reigning he would somehow come by the kingship. Malietoa seemed to Stevenson a miserable figure. "It is probable he might have called some five-sevenths of Samoa to his standard. And yet he sat there, helpless monarch, like a fowl trussed for roasting. The blame lies with himself, because he was a helpless creature."<sup>3</sup>

At any rate he did not call his warriors to his standard. A German squadron came in under Rear-Admiral Knorr, and the apparition so terrified the monarch that he appealed to the United States consul for protection under Article V. of the Treaty of 1878. He suggested that his flag should be hoisted under that of the United States until the trouble had blown over.

The consul complied to the extent of issuing a proclamation adjuring the population to peace, but he hesitated to promulgate his act of protection under the guns of the German ships. No sooner had Knorr taken his departure than Mr Greenebaum came out into the open with his proclamation and hoisted the American flag over the Samoan for all to see. He had no official authority for doing so, and Mr Bayard promptly repudiated the act and recalled him

<sup>1</sup> Rosebery to Malet, 19th February 1886 : P.P., C. 5629.

<sup>2</sup> *My Colonial Service*, by Sir G. W. Des Voeux, vol. ii., p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> *A Footnote to History*, by R. L. Stevenson.



(Bayard to Sir L. Sackville West, 1st June 1886). The German consul was doubly incensed when H.M.S. *Diamond* came in flying the Samoan flag at the main, and fired a salute in honour of Malietoa. It was so easy to believe that the two acts were done in concert.

The commanders of the *Diamond* and the United States ship *Mohican* worked admirably to produce a proper conference atmosphere. They induced Dr Stuebel to lower the offending German flag at Apia and to permit that of Malietoa to be hoisted. They gathered the factions round a table, and persuaded them to dismantle their forts and not to carry arms except for defence. The British Government reprimanded Malietoa for speaking in offensive terms of Germany. And finally the German and British consuls were both instructed to quit Samoa as soon as they had initiated the commissioners into their work.

**The Commission at Work.**—It was not a joint commission. Each of the investigators had to report separately to his Government. It was not a lengthy affair. Thurston was only twelve days in Apia. Mr G. H. Bates, the American commissioner, a lawyer of Wilmington, Delaware, and a "sensible, plain dealing, and outspoken man," was there three weeks. Travers, who arrived a month earlier than his colleagues, spent six weeks in Samoa.

The sequel is rather extraordinary. Before any report had been received from Thurston Krauel wrote to the Foreign Office forwarding "for your confidential information the scheme for the government of Samoa as confidentially communicated by Mr Thurston to the German consul," and stating that the proposed native government would be unacceptable to Germany (29th October 1886). A few days later he made a personal call and pressed on Lord Iddesleigh's attention alternative schemes, both of which assumed the incapacity of Malietoa to govern. Mr Harvey, who saw him, warmly championed Malietoa who, he said, could easily have disposed of the opposition of Tamasese if he had not been prevailed upon by the consuls to avoid bloodshed. Krauel claimed precisely the same prospect for Tamasese.

Travers, in his report, demanded openly that the government should be handed over to Germany.

**Native Government Impossible.**—Thurston's report was not presented until December, an able and constructive document. Nobody knew better than he the shortcomings of the Samoan character. He and the American commis-



sioner were both convinced that a native government pure and simple had no hope of success, but Thurston believed that with the help of a few foreign members and the sanction of a few men-of-war the native government could be so strengthened as to be able to carry on the administration. It was all a matter of preventing rival chiefs from raising their flags.

Germany, however, would have none of this. Thurston says candidly that he got the impression while in Samoa that the Germans were deliberately acting in such a manner as to render government by Malietoa impossible.

Bates objected to Germany assuming the administration for the very reason that she had predominating interests there; and to England because she also had been following a policy of annexation. America's freedom from any suspicion of wishing to annex was admitted by all, and she should be entrusted with the administration because her sole object would be to preserve the independence and neutrality of the islands.

Nothing at all resulted either from this investigation. The inquiry was doomed because it was not a joint one and no agreed scheme was asked for. Month after month passed. The kingship of Malietoa was whittled to a ludicrous shadow. The pretensions of Tamasese grew inversely. The two factions stood in battle array over against each other for weeks and months. For weeks and months the consuls pleaded for peace, and pleaded successfully. A new conference at Washington was proposed, but before it became tangible Bismarck lost patience with the defiance of Malietoa. On the birthday of the Kaiser drunken Samoans had said rude things to excited Germans, or *vice versa*.

"We shall be compelled to declare war against him," wrote Bismarck to Count Hatzfeldt (15th August 1887), "and to refuse him our recognition as ruler. We are unable to allow the prestige of the German Empire and the safety of its subjects to be jeopardised as it has been by Malietoa."

**Germany declares War.**—Great Britain and the United States considered it beneath the dignity of a great Empire to make war on so impotent a chieftain. But Bismarck was unrelenting. The insult to the emperor, he said, made it incompatible to allow Malietoa to rule any longer. War was declared, and it would continue until Malietoa submitted.

The other consuls besought the Samoan people to submit quietly to what they could not help. And so the "war" was bloodless. Malietoa escaped to the bush, and his

followers declined to give him up. A force from the German squadron landed to apprehend him, but he was not to be found. The Germans garrisoned Government House and brought in Tamasese, and proclaimed him king with royal salutes. The squadron threatened to proceed against any who did not recognise him, and most of them did so.

It was then announced that a force was to be landed to operate against Malietoa. The good-natured man came and gave himself up to avoid bloodshed, three weeks after the declaration of war. He was taken on board the *Bismarck* and deported, and for years he did not see Samoa. He went first to the Marshall Islands,<sup>1</sup> and then to the Cameroons, in West Africa.

**Tamasese King.**—Salisbury had agreed that tripartite government was doomed. Bayard was clamouring for the election of a king. But Tamasese was king. Downing Street did not contest his recognition. On the contrary, it instructed the consul to recognise him as *de facto* ruler pending fresh agreements between the powers (Foreign Office to Acting-Consul Wilson, 3rd November 1887). The High Commissioner saw that he was kept in power solely by the presence of the German men-of-war; but he too advised recognition as *de facto* ruler, and admonished the consul to continue acting on the municipal board, lest it should lapse and Tamasese gain ostensible jurisdiction over all Samoa. Unfortunately the United States consul took the other view, and his abstention gave the Germans the opportunity which they avidly seized. After some hesitation Salisbury agreed with Berlin that the municipal convention should be terminated, a step to which Germany had evidently instructed its consul two months earlier.

Berlin made no attempt to conceal the fact that the Government of Tamasese was actually a German Government. It was born and had its early growth under the guns of the squadron, and its executive officer was that same Herr Brandeis, whose conduct as secretary had called forth a protest from Malietoa a couple of years earlier. One of the earliest acts of the Tamasese Government was to declare a levy of 47,000 dollars on the natives, and the chiefs were instructed that if they could not procure the money they might borrow from German traders and mortgage their communal lands as security. Brandeis stoutly contended that no such restriction had been imposed, and that money

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5629, a Blue Book devoted entirely to the affairs of Samoa, contains the full narrative of these troubled years.

obtained from British firms would be as freely received; but Thurston believed the charge proved, and strongly urged the treaty powers not to permit alienation of native lands either to Germans or to anybody else, as tending to "bind the natives, body and soul, to resident foreign creditors."

**The Virtues of Brandeis.**—Though inclined to favour Germans, the Government of Brandeis seemed both to Thurston and to Captain Kane, R.N., of H.M.S. *Calliope*, to be conciliatory. Thurston was favourably impressed with Brandeis personally. "I take him to be an earnest man," he said, "anxious to do right; but he gave me the idea of being wanting both in experience and even in the elementary principles of political economy and administrative business." He steadfastly affirmed his desire to see an absolutely autonomous Samoa, without even German predomination.

R. L. Stevenson was equally favourably impressed. "The more I learn of his brief term of rule," he writes in *A Footnote to History*, "the more I learn to admire him and to wish we had his like. His government, take it for all in all, . . . the most promising that has ever been in these unlucky islands."

Malietoa had not been gone a year when the Tamasese Government was faced by a formidable native rising. A few disaffected chiefs "retired into the bush," as the euphemistic saying is. They were joined by some Malietoa men, and when Brandeis set forth with a malaga to punish them he returned discomfited with considerable losses. The Malietoa people elected as king one Mataafa, another Malietoa; and Brandeis issued a proclamation threatening to burn the villages of the island of Manono for their intrigue. He did it, and the German warships helped to tow the canoes of the punitive natives to and from the spot.

Then Brandeis proclaimed once more that it would be well for the people to go quietly home on pain of meeting with a like fate. The commander of the United States ship *Adams*, which was at Apia at the time, protested "in the name of the United States and of the civilised world in general against the use of a national war vessel for such a service."

**The Triumph of Mataafa.**—On 9th September the heads and rulers of the Malietoa family anointed Mataafa as king, and three days later they defeated their rival in two pitched battles, stormed the forts, and marched through

Apia to the seat of Tamasese's Government at Mulinuu. Here they were confronted by German sailors who, according to de Coetlogon, the British consul, were holding Mulinuu against Mataafa instead of protecting the foreign residents. But for this intervention the war would have been ended in twenty-four hours.

In this condition of stalemate, Rear-Admiral H. Fairfax arrived in the *Calliope*. He satisfied himself that the Government commanded the respect of neither natives nor foreigners, and was kept in office solely by German influence. He invited the German commanders to attend a conference to endeavour to arrive at a solution, but Captain Fritze replied: "This meeting will have a prominent political character, and because I got the strict orders nothing to do with politics on a place where a diplomatic German consul resides, therefore I must beg you to excuse myself that I can't come to this meeting."

**A German Reverse.**—Day by day the American warships steamed from point to point shadowing the actions of the German vessels and lodging protests whenever they thought proper. "Don't be vexed, young gentlemen of Great Governments," said Mataafa to a gathering of the consuls. "Please let Samoa alone till we have had a battle, say until one side or the other is whipped. Then Samoa will turn its attention to the making of agreements with the Great Powers."

But this was just the *dénouement* the German ships were determined to prevent. Their whole activity was directed to preventing Mataafa getting at his adversary and finishing the war.

At last upon a day, as they moved towards the enemy positions, the Mataafa people heard that the German warship *Olga* was about to land a considerable body of Tamasese warriors at Fayalii. Dispositions were at once made to resist the movement, and a fight ensued which resulted in the Germans themselves losing two officers and fifteen men killed, and one officer and thirty-eight men wounded. The squadron forthwith proceeded to inflict severe punishment on the Mataafa villages.

The pretext for making war on Mataafa and thus helping the interests of Tamasese was alluring. "Condign punishment" had to be inflicted, Bismarck told Hatzfeldt, and "our intervention will necessarily take the character of support to Tamasese." At the very moment of declaring war, and while disclaiming any desire to overturn the



Government, Bismarck was suggesting a resumption of the interrupted conference with Great Britain and the United States.

**America takes Action.**—In his message to Congress on 15th January 1889, the President of the United States remarked that Germany's actions seemed to lead to such a preponderance as was never contemplated and was inconsistent with every prior agreement, and gave rise to a suspicion that she was not content with a neutral position. He had insisted on Samoan autonomy being scrupulously observed. The Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs recommended an appropriation of 500,000 dollars for the execution of the obligations of the Republic under the treaties, with an additional 100,000 dollars for the improvement of the harbour of Pagopago and the construction there of a coaling station. Cleveland openly disapproved Germany's action in bullying such a weak nation as Samoa, and demanded a cessation of hostilities during the conference.

The debate in the Senate was in the same sense of determination. Sherman demanded that America should forthwith make good her rights by occupying Pagopago. England, he said, was apparently at one with Germany, and it was the duty of the President to step in and offer America's good offices to Samoa under the Treaty of 1878 (Mr Herbert to Salisbury, 1st February 1889).

**The Drama of the Hurricane.**—Upon this heated atmosphere broke with dramatic effect the catastrophe of the hurricane at Apia, so eloquently described by Stevenson in *A Footnote to History*. Practically the whole armada of the jealous rival powers—a very considerable armada for the business in hand—was in a few hours strewn on the beach. When day broke a few score German and American seamen, unarmed and helpless castaways, were all that remained from six warships. And the good-natured Polynesians, forgetting their factions and their injuries, pulled the exhausted sufferers from the surf and nursed and fed them back to life. Thus on the spot the work of conciliation, already begun but much less hopefully in the chancelleries of Europe, was launched upon its course. One can only conjecture how much it contributed to peace that five-sixths of the armaments which had watched and countered each other so jealously for so many months, was thus suddenly and ruthlessly removed for ever from the controversy.



Meanwhile Bismarck had taken a drastic view of the actions of his consul at Apia, and roundly censured his policy of aggression. His memorandum was a complete vindication of the peacefulness of Mataafa and the moderation of the British and United States consuls. He laid the responsibility for the military operations at the door of his own Consul Knappe, who seemed to have acted "without authorisation, without necessary grounds, and without probability of success"; moreover, his attempt to disarm Mataafa and afterwards the Tamasese troops "was not militarily practicable." "We have no orders to give the people of Samoa," he added, "as far as the ordering of their own affairs is concerned, nor have we any reason to undertake the ordering of those affairs" (Memo. by Bismarck to Dr Stuebel).

To the consul himself Bismarck telegraphed: "I have to remark that you have no right to withdraw foreigners from the jurisdiction of their consuls. The objections of your English colleagues to the steps taken are well founded. You will find yourself in the wrong in any dispute which arises in consequence of them. The demand you made as to Germany undertaking the administration of Samoa lies outside your instructions and our aims. Withdraw it at once. You are not authorised to make any demands except for the extradition of those persons who have criminally attacked us. If your telegram has been correctly understood here I cannot approve your conduct" (Bismarck to Dr Knappe, 31st January 1889).<sup>1</sup>

**The Berlin Conference, 1889.**—This summary cleaning up, together with an Imperial instruction to naval commanders to test thoroughly the legal basis of any action they were asked by the consuls to take, created a most favourable impression as to Bismarck's sincerity in entering the conference. The first act of the conference, moreover, was Count Bismarck's announcement that Malietoa had expressed a sincere wish to be reconciled with Germany, and that in consequence the Kaiser had ordered him to be released and repatriated. He added that Germany accepted as a basis of discussion the neutrality of Samoa and equal rights for the subjects of the treaty powers.

The delegates to the conference were:—

*Germany*—Count Herbert Bismarck (President), Baron von Holstein, Dr Krauel.

*Great Britain*—Sir E. B. Malet, Ambassador at Berlin;

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5907.

Mr C. E. Scott, Minister at Berne; Mr Joseph Archer Crowe, Commercial Attaché for Europe.

*United States*—Mr John A. Kasson, of Iowa; Mr William W. Phelps, of New Jersey; Mr George H. Bates, of Delaware.

They were plenipotentiaries, and they commenced their meetings on 29th April. The final act of the conference, signed on 14th June, recognised Samoa as an independent and neutral state, with Malietoa Laupepa as king. A supreme court was set up with a single judge, to be named by the three powers in concert if they could agree, and if not by the King of Norway and Sweden. A municipal council was established for the government of Apia, to consist of six elected members and a president "of mature years and of good reputation for honour, justice, and impartiality," who was to be agreed upon by the powers, or was to be a Swede, Dutchman, Swiss, Mexican, or Brazilian nominated by the head of his own nation. Alienation of lands was carefully provided against, and a commission was established to decide upon existing claims.

There were some quaint touches at the conference illustrating the traditional attachment of the British delegates to the ideal of an autonomous native state. For this reason they objected to the resolution against alienation, as tending to restrict the sovereign rights of the Samoan people! For this reason they questioned the propriety of forbidding the traffic in arms, but eventually, conceiving the possibility of a government faced by rebellion, they restricted the import to "the purposes of the government." They even declined responsibility for nominating a chief justice lest they might be held in any way responsible for his actions.

**Malietoa again King.**—The British delegates did, however, take up a stand on the question of the kingship. They held that the Samoan people should have whom they preferred. They suggested, and Bismarck thought the suggestion "sensible and acceptable," that if such a thing as a peaceful election could possibly be held, Malietoa would be elected by a large majority. On the strength of this, the conference decided to intimate to the Samoans that if they wished the powers would sanction the election of Malietoa. And thus it was that, at the eleventh hour, the confidence so long reposed by the Malietoa party in the sympathy of the British Government was justified. It was, in fact, British influence that brought back the kindly incompetent to his throne.

On 8th November, then, the consuls at Apia announced the election of Malietoa to be king, and soon afterwards the Tamasese party declared their allegiance to the new order. The treaty was finally ratified by the United States Senate on 5th February 1890. America saluted His Majesty with twenty-one guns and, to help his national finances, presented to the Samoan people the valuable wrecks of the warships cast ashore in the hurricane. And so the new régime was inaugurated.

Things should have gone better than they did, for undoubtedly the conference at Berlin meant well. But its good intentions were strangled at birth. Unpardonable delays in making appointments and getting the machinery of government into working order gave malcontents time to raise their heads and evil-disposed persons pretexts for whispering that all was not well. The election of Malietoa was announced in November 1889, and was accepted by "the chiefs and orators of the whole of Samoa" on 17th April 1890. But there was no sign of the most important official, and already in May the non-appearance of the Chief Justice was causing a "growing feeling of distrust among all classes."

The idea got abroad that the powers were no longer supporting Malietoa, and the consuls, to keep up the king's prestige, had to warn certain villages against collecting fine mats "to bring to a certain high chief." It was an omen of rebellion.

Not till 7th July did the King of Sweden and Norway nominate his subject, Otto Conrad Waldemar Cedercrantz, then assistant judge of the Svea Hofratt, to be Chief Justice of Samoa.

**Absolutism and Cricket.**—Meanwhile Malietoa reigned as absolute monarch. Some of his decrees were not exactly calculated to allay ill-feeling. He was a keen and earnest reformer, and yearned to see his people come back to the pristine habits of industry which they had forsaken in the long years of party strife. The English game of cricket had become in those far-distant seas the very acme of debauchery. When Stevenson was there cricket matches "where a hundred played upon a side endured at times for weeks, and ate up the country like the presence of an army." There was a strong political flavour about their cricket, and the whole country fell under its influence.

Perhaps because it was English and because the opposing osts, marching to the ground, always saluted ceremoniously

at the British consulate, the Germans prohibited cricket being played in the streets of Apia, or in sight of them. Malietoa took that leaf out of the German book, but for quite another reason. Cricket, he felt, was really ruining his people, as horse-racing and gambling might, or as the *tangi* (the feast of mourning) impoverishes many a Maori village in New Zealand. He wanted to break its spell and to lead them back to ways of industry.

"I am of opinion," he decreed, "that this game should be forbidden, else nobody would think of doing useful work. From it results the shortness of food, and the impossibility to think of ways and means to earn money for paying taxes to the Government and for paying debts to the merchants. By it the work of teaching the young generation is also obstructed."

But not so easily would Samoa accept the deprivation. The judge Tofae himself rejected the ordinance, and had to be reprimanded for contumacy.

**Arrival of the Chief Justice.**—Cedercrantz, with a Swedish cavalry captain as marshal of the court and chief of police, did not arrive in Samoa until eighteen months after the final act of the conference, and when he did arrive he declined to open his court until a fitting court-house had been erected. The other principal functionary, the President of the municipality of Apia, was selected by Germany in the person of Baron Arnold Senft von Pilsach, a Prussian *regierungs assessor*, and his appointment was only approved in January 1891. Before he sailed from Europe his first council, consisting of three Germans, two British, and one American, had been elected. Cedercrantz, by a perfectly natural process, assumed many of the duties of the president before he arrived, and did not willingly relinquish them. When Pilsach did get control of his affairs he endeavoured to dictate to the Government, and thus, within six months of their appearance in Samoa, both of the European officials had spoiled their chances of success and thrown the Government back as before on the good offices of the consuls.

The first shock to the Chief Justice was the refusal of H.M.S. *Cordelia* to co-operate in bringing for trial a large number of natives of Tutuila who had been in a state of passive rebellion. Neither the captain nor the consul could find any warrant for such action. The Chief Justice was mortified. He had expected the active help of the warships of the powers, and confessed himself unable to carry on



without. In June Mataafa was almost in open rebellion, and the consuls had to mediate to keep the peace.

**A Bankrupt Government.**—It was soon clear that Malietoa and the consuls were to be ranged on one side and Cedercrantz and von Pilsach on the other, but mutually antagonistic. The finances of the Government were hopeless, and the officials had not the grip to put the taxing machinery into operation. While the consuls urged works of development, von Pilsach spent the revenues of the municipality on erecting a prison at a cost of 7500 dollars, and capitol buildings at a cost of from 10,000 to 15,000 dollars. In October affairs seemed already to have reached a climax, when the Chief Justice went off to Australia and Fiji without leaving any deputy. The British consul insisted to Salisbury that better results would be obtained if they dismissed both of the costly officials and left the government to the consular board, who had already given satisfactory services, and to whom the king in any case turned in case of difficulty.

There can be no doubt that the treaty powers, by their dilatoriness in making the appointments and by withholding the sanction of their men-of-war in the early days of the new régime, ruined their scheme. The state of Samoa in, say, 1893 was little better, if at all, than in 1888. No different result could possibly have been expected. The constant proclamations of the consuls that Malietoa only was king, that he was strong because the great powers were behind him were, to say the least, undignified. Over and over again von Pilsach resigned, and his resignation was returned to him. The British consul vainly urged Malietoa to develop his organs of government and his economic resources as the best means of rendering his rivals impotent. He had not the capacity to do so.

And so the state of Samoa staggered on from year to year. The Chief Justice and the President of the Council both resigned, and their places were taken by others more promising. And certainly there was an absence of civil war for a few years.

**New Troubles.**—At length in 1898 fresh troubles arose. Malietoa Laupepa died in August, almost at the moment when his old rival Mataafa returned from Jaluit, whither the powers had banished him for rebellion. In spite of his undertaking not to aspire to the throne his followers pronounced in his favour. The Chief Justice held the election invalid owing to the ban placed upon him by Germany at



the conference of Berlin for his outrages on German sailors. The opposing factions took the field. Malietoa's successor was defeated, and the whole party, with the Chief Justice, took refuge in H.M.S. *Porpoise*.<sup>1</sup>

After prolonged negotiations a provisional government was set up on 4th January 1899 under "The High Chief Mataafa." Fighting continued intermittently, and New Zealand offered troops to assist British interests. British and American ships of war landed detachments in support of Malietoa Tanumafili and supplied the Malietoa party with arms and ammunition, an act for which they were afterwards held responsible by the King of Sweden.<sup>2</sup>

**The Commission of 1899.**—Yet another commission was appointed, this time with full powers to act. It consisted of Mr C. N. E. Eliot (Great Britain), Mr Bartlett Tripp (United States), and Baron H. Sternburg (Germany), and it undertook to remedy the state of Samoa.

They came to an early conclusion that it was impossible to say any good whatever of the office of the king, which had all along been the prime cause of disorder, and they forthwith abolished it. In place they proposed to divide the country into districts, and to govern it on the lines of Fiji through chiefs who should meet annually at Apia. The existence of traders and settlers of three nationalities seemed doomed to produce rivalries and partisanship, and the commission expressed a view which had been voiced by some of the best authorities in the past:—

"We take this opportunity of recording our opinion that the only natural and normal form of government for these islands, and the only system that can assure permanent prosperity and tranquillity is a government by one power."

Unfortunately this was outside the order of reference, and the commission valiantly struggled, like its predecessors, to patch up something practicable. The appointment of an administrator with full powers was explained to a *fono* and generally approved on 14th July 1899, and, pending the approval of the scheme in Europe, Dr Solf, the German consul, retained office as President of the Municipal Council, and the United States consul as acting Chief Justice.

Before the report could be properly considered in Europe, England became deeply involved in negotiations which were leading quite plainly to war with the Boer Republics. Public opinion was equally engrossed with the

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 9506.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., Cd. 1083.

Government in the grave drama, and nobody was in the mood to study the affairs of a small archipelago in the Pacific.

Salisbury had come to the conclusion ten years earlier that the continuance of three powers in the control of Samoan affairs was an arrangement that never could give satisfaction, and he now saw both the need and the expediency of settling the Samoan difficulty out of hand. He entered into negotiations with Berlin, and on 14th November signed with Count Hatzfeldt a convention and declaration for the settlement of outstanding questions (Salisbury to Chargé d'Affaires, Berlin, 14th November 1899).

**The Convention of 1899.**—The Convention<sup>1</sup> accepted the view of the commissioners that no solution could be found in tripartite government. Britain, therefore, for concessions in West Africa and in the Solomon Islands, renounced in favour of Germany all her rights in the islands of Upolu and Savaii, and in favour of the United States all in Tutuila and the islands to the east of longitude 171° W. The islands were then divided between Germany and the United States according to that arrangement.

These negotiations, like previous ones, were carried through without the cognisance of the British colony most affected—in this case New Zealand, and Chamberlain, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, had the duty of submitting it to the Seddon Government as an accomplished fact. Tripartite government, he said, had definitively failed, and partition was the only possible solution of the problem. The United States had an indisputable claim to Tutuila by virtue of her treaty rights. Savaii and Upolu were indissolubly associated. In Upolu neither Britain nor Germany had preponderating rights, so neither could be expected to retire without receiving compensation.

“Every effort was made by Her Majesty’s Government,” he continued, “in view of the great interest felt in Samoa by the Australasian colonies, to secure the possession of Upolu by important sacrifices of valuable territory in other parts of the Empire; but the long connection between Germany and Samoa had created in the former country a sentiment which prohibited the success of these endeavours, and in the circumstances it became the duty of Her Majesty’s Government to accept a settlement on other lines which offered material advantage to the Empire. It should be remembered that this country has no separate rights in Samoa, and that her position in the group was both territorially and politically

<sup>1</sup> P.P., Cd. 7.

identical with that of Germany; and that while Great Britain enjoyed perhaps the larger share of the external commerce of the group, German interests in land and in the internal trade were largely preponderant."

The same conditions obtained in Tonga, except that British material interests were the greater, so that the withdrawal of Germany from Tonga was parallel to that of Britain from Samoa. The only actual cession of territory was that some of the Solomon Islands were ceded by Germany to Britain. Chamberlain consoled New Zealand with the reflection that she could not fail to benefit by some of the increase of trade which would follow the establishment of settled conditions in Samoa.<sup>1</sup>

**Seddon's Vigorous Protest.**—Owing to the overwhelming distraction of the war in South Africa the agreement passed with little notice. New Zealand, however, felt deeply aggrieved, and Seddon made no secret of his chagrin, which he doubtless felt all the more in view of the veiled rivalries in the Pacific which the Federation Commission had disclosed between Australia and New Zealand. He took the line that Stout had taken fifteen years earlier, and based his complaint, not upon any supposed economic value of Samoa, but almost entirely upon the strategic possibilities which it might hold in the hands of a foreign power. He wrote (Memo. by Seddon in despatch Ranfurly to Colonial Office, 16th April 1900)<sup>2</sup>:—

"The colonies of Australasia feel keenly the placing in the Pacific—the central group of the Pacific—fortified positions of foreign powers that may in the future be used as bases of attack on them and their commerce. The colonists believe that there must have been some grave diplomatic reason for such a step not disclosed in the official documents, and as the matter has been ended it is useless to comment on the reasons put forward in the despatch."

He added a prophetic doubt whether in the long run it would benefit Germany, as a manufacturing nation relying on foreign trade, to do such an unfriendly act towards the colonies as to push Great Britain out of Samoa. New Zealand's trade with Germany was itself greater than that of Samoa could ever be.

"The surrender of Samoa will in future be a source of anxiety, and entail expense on Great Britain and the colonies

<sup>1</sup> P.P. N.Z. 1901, A2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, A1.

in preparing for and providing against eventualities. However, now that it has been done it is necessary that immediately it is opportune steps be taken to put the islands admitted to be British on a satisfactory footing."

He suggested in his blunt manner that New Zealand should take over the Cook and Tonga Islands and Fiji, giving the natives representation in the New Zealand Parliament. "Some definite action of a forward character is required," he added, "at the earliest opportune moment, for the surrender of Samoa has disheartened the natives in the islands, disappointed the people of Australasia, and lowered the prestige of Great Britain in this part of the globe."

Chamberlain agreed that the arrangements for the government of the islands in the British sphere of influence were not such as should be permanently maintained, and he foreshadowed a new understanding under which "the great self-governing colonies in whose interests they had been brought under British control may relieve Her Majesty's Government of responsibility for their administration." It would, however, have to be done cautiously. In the meantime he merely accepted the suggestion that the Cook Islands should be incorporated in New Zealand.<sup>1</sup>

**Polynesia Irredenta.**—And so Samoa passed definitely out of the British orbit. On 1st March 1900 the German flag was hoisted at Apia, and the administration inaugurated under Imperial decree. Des Voeux was right in saying that Pagopago, in the American island of Tutuila, was the only valuable position, and Lord Shaftesbury was right when he said in the House of Lords that the islands in which England gave Germany a free hand had no strategic value or importance to Great Britain.

But they were something more. They were the home of the Polynesian race most allied to the Maori. They were a group to which New Zealand had shown more than a sentimental attachment. They were islands civilised by British missionaries. And they were the home and burial-place of Robert Louis Stevenson.

Samoa was to New Zealand when the great war broke out what New Guinea was to Australia, an irredenta in which the honour of the people was involved, and which they hastened to redeem.

<sup>1</sup> P.P. N.Z. 1901, A2.



## CHAPTER XI

### SPAIN AND AMERICA

**Vestiges of Spanish Supremacy.**—Long before the entry into the Pacific of the powers which to-day share the control of its wide archipelagos Spain was established as the only European nation possessing colonies there.

But were they colonies in any real sense? Certainly she had establishments at the Philippines and a vague suzerainty over the adjacent groups, the Carolines, Pelew, and Sulu. With the emancipation of South America all its outliers fell away from the Spanish Empire. So thorough was the Spanish retreat that when the quarrel arose with Peru in the sixties the Spanish attack came from Europe and not from the Philippines, and the occupation of the Chincha Islands was ordered purely to put pressure on Peru. They were evacuated the following year, and the incident had no Pacific significance whatever.

Spanish authority over the Caroline and Marshall Islands was essentially ecclesiastical, and was embodied in a papal edict of Alexander VI. towards the end of the fifteenth century. The Carolines, which have an area of about 380 square miles, were discovered by the Portuguese Vasco da Rocha in 1527 and were visited by the Spaniard Francesco Lazeano in 1686. He it was who named them after Charles II. of Spain. In his wake came Spanish missionaries from the American colonies, but their efforts were not very successful.

The Marshall Islands were discovered by Alvaro de Saavedra in 1529, and fully explored by Captains Marshall and Gilbert in 1788. It was Magellan who discovered the Mariannes in 1521. They were occupied by Spain in 1668. The Pelew Islands were first discovered by Ruy Lopez de Villalobos in 1543. Magellan discovered the Philippines in the same year in which he visited the Mariannes, and it was here that he lost his life in a skirmish with the natives. A fleet from Mexico in 1565 conquered the group, and, owing



chiefly to its proximity to China and its own richness, it became the most valuable of the Spanish colonies in the Pacific.

**Spanish Assertion of Sovereignty.**—German trading firms and shipping interests reached the Spanish archipelagos chiefly from the establishments of the Godeffroy Company in the islands to the southward. They found practically no opposition. Indeed they found in most of the islands no constituted authority.

In 1875 the Spanish governor of the Philippines suddenly asserted the authority of Spain over the Carolines. Great Britain and Germany both lodged protests, declaring that they knew of no treaty or arrangement by which Caroline and Pelew belonged to Spain. The note remained unanswered, but the governor continued to molest the traders of both nations. To a renewed British protest, Senor Canovas del Castillo expressly declared that Spain had never claimed sovereignty over the Carolines; and this declaration was strengthened by that of Senor Calderon Callantes, the Foreign Minister, on 3rd January 1877, limiting Spanish claims in these waters to the Sulu archipelago and adjacent islands. For a time traders were left undisturbed.

In the early eighties fresh disputes arose concerning trading rights in Sulu and North Borneo. For a long time they were debated until on 7th March 1885 an agreement was come to between Great Britain, Germany, and Spain, whereby Sulu was adjudged to belong to Spain, who in turn guaranteed freedom of trade to the British and Germans in the archipelago and agreed not to levy dues where there was no effective administration. Spain also renounced all her claims in Borneo.

Zimmermann says there was so little doubt in 1885 as to the independence of the Carolines that when they were allotted to German influence in the Anglo-German declaration Germany decided, in response to the request of interested firms, to place the whole archipelago of Caroline, Marshall, Brown, and Providence under its protection. In Marshall the German Empire had already in 1878 acquired rights of trade and a naval station by treaty with the chiefs of Jaluit.

This decision was communicated to the Spanish Government on 6th August 1885, and Great Britain declared its adhesion to its former attitude. But in the meantime, says Zimmermann, a new enthusiasm had been awakened in Spain in favour of oversea undertakings. Determined to make up for past neglect, the Government had already in

1884 secretly sent a warship from the Philippines which had hoisted the flag at the Carolines. In face of this the German announcement engendered a campaign of fierce anger against Germany. The Spanish Government claimed the Carolines as an old possession, and stated that it had already appointed a governor for the group. Germany contended that in the absence of any administration they must be regarded as derelict, but she was willing that the claim should be examined, and failing agreement that it should be submitted to arbitration.

**Indignation in Spain.**—There was intense popular excitement in Spain and indignation against Germany. A Spanish warship was sent to Yap, in the Carolines, and while it lay there inactive the German gunboat *Itis* on 25th August hoisted the German flag and took formal possession under the eyes of the Spanish commander. The latter declared that he had been instructed to proclaim Spanish sovereignty, and that the act had only been delayed pending the completion of an altar for the ceremony. In the following weeks the Germans hoisted their flag at Ponape, Ruk, and other islands, while the Spaniards laid hold upon Pelew.

There were anti-German riots in Madrid and Valencia, for which the Government duly apologised. At the same time it declared itself willing to grant full freedom of trade to the Germans in the Carolines. It would submit to the arbitration of one person only, namely the Pope, since the Spanish claim was based on an ancient papal edict assigning this region of the world to the sovereignty of Spain.

King Alfonso did not expect that Germany would agree to this proposal, but he did not know how disagreeable the dispute was to Bismarck. In his view the affair had assumed dimensions altogether out of proportion to its importance. He summoned Herr Robertson (of Robertson & Hernsheim) from Hamburg and explained to him the political bearing of the dispute, impressing upon him that as German interests were already circumscribed by the agreement, sacrifices would have to be made. Spain had demanded a treaty similar to that regarding Sulu, and he could not complain much of that.

To the surprise of the whole world, says Zimmermann, Bismarck agreed to submit the matter to arbitration by the Pope, hoping that an issue from other outstanding differences might also be arrived at. The Pope agreed to act; and on 22nd October he gave his judgment, declaring that Spain must be acknowledged the possessor of the Caroline and Pelew Islands, but that she must establish a proper admin-

istration for the security of European undertakings. Germany, moreover, should have equal rights with Spain of establishing plantations and businesses, and complete freedom of trade, shipping, and fisheries, besides the right of establishing a naval station. The United States had already secured liberty of religious worship in the islands.

Both parties accepted the decision, and a protocol was signed at Rome on 17th December 1885.

**England demands Equality.**—At this stage Great Britain intervened in the discussion to demand equal rights in the Caroline and other groups with those proposed to be granted to Germany. In Sulu England, Germany, and Spain had negotiated an agreement recognising Spanish sovereignty on condition that the ships of the two first-named were allowed full trading facilities and were not called upon to pay customs duties in places where there was no effective Spanish jurisdiction. In regard to the Carolines also, England declined to recognise the sovereignty of Spain except in the same measure as Germany had done.

Spain took up a firm attitude against the demand. Though fully alive to the benefits to be derived from friendly relations with England, Senor Moret declined to believe that England had the same need as Germany for a naval establishment in that part of the Pacific, and he begged the British Government to waive that portion of the demand. Salisbury readily agreed, and on 8th January 1886 Sir Clare Ford signed the protocol in the exact form suggested by Great Britain, securing to Great Britain and to British subjects any and all of the advantages, immunities, and privileges which were accorded to Germany.<sup>1</sup>

**Germany takes Possession of Marshall Islands.**—Fortunately for Germany, the dispute did not include the Marshall group, where the Deutsche Handels und Plantagen Gesellschaft and Robertson & Hernsheim had been active for some time, and where the German warship *Ariadne* in 1878 had acquired a harbour and coaling station by treaty with the chiefs. Herr Hernsheim himself was appointed consul here, just as Weber had been at Samoa, and following the understanding with England the warship *Nautilus* was sent down to take possession of the whole group. A new treaty was concluded with the chiefs on 15th October 1885, and the act of possession embraced, besides Marshall, the Brown and Providence groups, as regards which Germany did not recognise any Spanish sovereignty.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4613.

Explaining his still reluctant colonial policy at the end of September, Bismarck insisted to Herr Robertson that the German colonial traders must look after themselves as those of England and Holland did, and he pushed this vague interpretation of colonial policy to the extent of constituting the trading companies both north and south of the line the governing administrative authorities of the region on behalf of the Imperial Government. This was done through the so-called *Schutzbrief*, a system which caused considerable friction both in New Guinea and in Marshall, and had eventually to be abolished.

**The Exit of Spain.**—It was only another stage in the decline of the Spanish vestiges of power in the Pacific. Having come to an understanding with Great Britain as to spheres of influence, Germany lost no time in developing to the full the freedom given to her in Marshall and Caroline. She pushed her own trade with a ruthless disregard for the equality that she had covenanted to give to British interests.

On the outbreak of the Spanish-American War a considerable Spanish naval force was based on Manila in the Philippines. The American fleet hurrying to reinforce Admiral Dewey passed through the Mariannes. Looking in *en route* at the largest island, Guam, it took possession without resistance, the Spanish governor being still ignorant that war had broken out. By Articles II. and III. of the peace treaty, signed at Paris in December 1898, the whole of the Philippines and Sulu Islands, and the single island of Guam, were ceded to America in consideration of a payment of £4,000,000.

Germany at once negotiated a bargain with Spain for the purchase of the islands in which she had commercial predominance, and on 12th February 1899 she took over the sovereignty of the Caroline, Pelew, and Marianne groups, with the exception of Guam, on payment of a sum of £837,000. She had already in 1885 made good her claim to the Marshalls, which did not properly come within the Spanish orbit. There were still a few islands left by inadvertence outside the limits of the cession in the Treaty of Paris, and these America took over by purchase, on payment of £20,000, in 1900.

Thus was the last spark of Spanish sovereignty in the Pacific extinguished. The only European power which had posts in the Pacific Islands in 1800 made her final and unhappy exit in 1900.

**The New American Outlook.**—The advent of the United States as a Pacific power was to a large extent accidental, the



corollary of national duties rather than the expression of national ambitions. The relation of America towards the various island kingdoms in the early days of the nineteenth century was a benevolent one, with no political *arrière pensée*. The outlook of the Republic until the middle of the nineteenth century was entirely towards the Atlantic. And how long it would have continued so, but for the discovery of gold in the province of California one can only conjecture. Rivalries with the British in Canada, engendering a good deal of bad temper over the boundary question and the settlement of Oregon, induced a current of quixotic enterprise which Professor Dunning describes as almost unreasonable. There were much more promising fields for the adventurous spirit of the American pioneer than the remote confines of Oregon, where at the moment the two powers were in joint occupation.

It was Polk's hot-headed presidential campaign that gave the United States her first outlook on the Pacific. Until the boundary question with Canada was settled, Aberdeen kept dallying with the proposition to purchase the California provinces for England. With that threat to counter, American troops marched into California in 1846, and almost at the same time the United States gave notice to terminate the joint occupation of Oregon, which had lasted since 1818. These were political disputes far in advance of economic reason. Though they compelled the United States to secure her Pacific sea-board, they did not materially hasten the development of a Pacific policy. That could obviously only come as a consequence of great industrial development, or of the opening of the Panama Canal.

**Early Opinions of the Pacific.**—Wilkes in 1840 had already seen that Hawaii could only be of use to the power that held the Pacific sea-board; but for many years after the acquisition of California, which became definitive in 1848, no steps were taken to acquire Hawaii or any Pacific establishments whatever. The first advances of this nature were the commercial treaties with Hawaii (1849) and Samoa (1878) and Tonga (1878), to ensure ports of call for American mail steamers crossing the Pacific to Australasia and to the Far East. Only that with Samoa led directly to territorial acquisition, and this was forced entirely by the overbearing attitude of Germany.

The one instance of direct acquisition was at the Galapagos Islands, the nearest group in the Pacific to the site of the Panama Canal. The discussion of that project and the conclusion of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty between



Great Britain and America, under which neither party should attempt to control the Canal, were conditioned by that same wave of ill-feeling and bitterness which Dunning finds so unreasonable. Almost as soon as it was ratified it began to be suspected. Great Britain's control of the Mosquito coast seemed to America to threaten the integrity of the Canal, and to impugn the good faith of the treaty, and eventually the territory was returned to the republic of Honduras. Almost at the same time, in 1854, the United States obtained the Galapagos Islands by cession from Ecuador. Britain and France at once protested, and the cession was annulled.

The eventual absorption of Hawaii into the Republic was an obvious outcome of the settlement of Americans in the group, the growth of American interests and influence there, and the midway position of Honolulu on the steam routes to the East. American activity in the Far East commenced in the middle of the century in Japan, and was again prominent at the end of the century in the Boxer rebellion, but it was throughout entirely divorced from acquisition.

**The Spanish American War.**—When the war between Spain and America broke out the presence of a Spanish squadron in the Philippines compelled the American naval forces to pursue it, and purely from this circumstance the end of the war found the United States forces in possession of the Philippines and Guam.

The colonial misgovernment which had caused the war dictated the necessity of retaining a colony which had not been more successfully managed than Cuba. Its administration was assumed by the United States in a spirit of trusteeship, but it is idle to expect that the end of the trusteeship is in sight. It is extremely unlikely that the United States will feel justified in handing over its trust to the natives for many years to come.

**America's Outlook to Asia.**—Mahan shows that when Hawaii was acquired by the United States it was regarded "from the point of view of defence rather than as a stepping-stone to any further influence in the world. The expansionists themselves, up to the war with Spain, were dominated by the purely defensive ideas inherited from the earlier days of our national existence." Hawaii and such places were mere posts, "where it was increasingly evident that influences might be established dangerous to the United States as she then was. Such influences must be forestalled: if not by immediate action, at least by a definite policy." The

proposition of Asiatic domination which was presented by the sudden acquisition of the Philippines in the war with Spain at first staggered the American public by its unexpectedness and novelty; yet no difficulty was found in accepting it—"the widest sweep, in space, of our national extension." The whole outlook was already changed. Japan in 1897 had expressed displeasure at America's assumption of Hawaii; yet Japan welcomed her advent in the Philippines a year or two later.

And being once established in the Philippines, with a firm resolve to fulfil her trust there, the United States found Hawaii suddenly aggrandised in respect to her external policy. It was no longer a mere outpost of defence for the Pacific sea-board of America. It had become also a line of communication for the defence of American interests and possessions in Asia itself. The strengthening of Pearl Harbour was now a matter of urgency, for America had established herself in Asia and was committed, if need be, to being a power there. "The field for our external exertion," says Mahan, "is clearly indicated as the Pacific and the East." And in earnest thereof the United States bore an equal part with the other powers in the China expedition of that year.<sup>1</sup>

The first Philippine Commission recommended to Congress that a permanent fighting force of ships should be maintained on the Asiatic station, including battleships and armoured cruisers, since owing to the great distance it would take a considerable time for reinforcements to arrive in case of attack. The interests of commerce, moreover, made it desirable to be able to show the flag effectively in those waters.<sup>2</sup> The opening of the Panama Canal in recent years has brought the Asiatic station much closer to the main strength of the United States Navy. But before this came to pass, one of the most important naval demonstrations of our time—the visit of the American battle fleet to the Pacific—was decided upon as a diplomatic measure to correct a rather strained relationship between Asia and America.

Tutuila, in Samoa, first acquired as a port of call for mail steamers bound for Australia and New Zealand, possesses no such character as Hawaii. The Samoan policy of the United States has grown entirely out of this, and has as yet no other facet. Nor has America shown any desire to extend her possessions in this region of the Pacific.

<sup>1</sup> *The Problem of Asia*, by Captain A. T. Mahan, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> Sen. Docs. 56th Congress, 1st Sess., vol. xlv., pp. 127-8.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE CANADIAN OUTLOOK

**Looking East and South.**—Of all the British communities bordering on the Pacific, it must be confessed that Canada has had less influence on Pacific policy, because she has taken less interest in the Pacific than any of the others. The outlook of the senior dominion has been almost entirely to the Atlantic and to the south. The only questions affecting the Pacific which have aroused much interest have been those emanating from the rivalries of Canada and the United States. The opening of the great artery of traffic from Europe to the East through Canada has not produced a Pacific outlook in the Dominion any more than the disputes over the influx of labourers from China and Japan.

In the early days of the Canadian colonies the Pacific sea-board bore the various names of "The Indian Territory," "New Caledonia," and "British Oregon." Different districts had previously been named, by Vancouver, "New Hanover," "New Cornwall," and "New Georgia," but these names never survived white colonisation.

**The Nootka Incident.**—The wide-flung claims of Spain, based on local discoveries and papal grants, extended at one time along the whole Pacific coast of America, north and south. In 1789, at least two hundred years after these claims were first pronounced, the question came up for discussion in a practical manner in the celebrated Nootka affair, which brought England and Spain almost to the verge of war.

Gaining a hint of a proposed Russian company for the colonisation of the coast of North America, the Viceroy of Mexico fitted out an expedition and despatched it thither with orders to forestall the Russians and to assert the sovereignty of Spain by right of conquest. Arriving at Nootka in May, the Spaniards found at anchor ships of

various nationalities, and ashore a British trading station. They seized several British ships and took formal possession of the place in the name of Spain.

When the news of the outrage reached England there was great excitement, and active preparations were made for war. At the last moment, seeing little hope of support, Charles IV. of Spain withdrew his claims, and on 28th October 1790 the dispute was compromised by the signing of the Nootka Convention. Full restitution and reparation were made to the English shipowners. The rights of both countries were acknowledged, but, strangely enough, the crucial question of the sovereignty was not touched.

**The Russian Company.**—The omission left the field open for innumerable disputes in the future. It was, in fact, the kernel of most of the Canadian-American quarrels on the Pacific sea-board. In 1799 the Russian American Company was formed by Imperial ukase to exploit the possibilities of the discoveries of Behring and Chirikoff; to control all the coasts of America north of latitude 55 deg.; to extend the territory and commerce of Russia; and to promote the Greek Catholic faith—almost exactly the same mission with which the Viceroy of Mexico had charged his expedition ten years earlier. The Russian undertaking had its seat of control at Sitka, on Baranoff Island, named after its most famous head, Governor Baranoff, who was an autocrat for many years until his death in 1817.

The most constructive of the Russian pro-consuls was Count Nikolai Resanoff, who arrived at Sitka in 1804. He it was who conceived the idea of extending the Russian occupation far down into the warm latitudes of California, where the Russian peasants and Indian fishermen might earn a good living by supplying fresh vegetables, farm produce, fruit, and fish to the more populous regions of the south. In 1812 Kushoff, with the concurrence of the Spanish Government, planted a settlement in California called "Ross" (or Rossia), which continued till 1842 with more or less success. Meanwhile the Russian navigators—Krusenstern in 1803, Kotzebue in 1816, Bellingshausen a few years later—made valuable and inspiring discoveries throughout the northern and eastern Pacific, and were directly responsible for the plantation of small colonies, mostly from Sitka, in Hawaii and in Tahiti.

The settlement at Ross was never more than a modest one, and was never at any time flourishing. It was sold to America when the Hudson Bay Company made its arrange-



ment to supply the settlements from Vancouver with the produce Ross was designed to furnish.

**A Littoral Dispute.**—When the charter of the Russian Company was renewed in 1821, the Tzar laid claim to the whole of the coast of America as far south as latitude 51 deg., *i.e.*, almost to the northern end of Vancouver Island. England and the United States at once challenged the claim, but Russia proceeded to make good her right by seizing American vessels for trespass. The negotiations which followed ended the actual dispute in 1824 by a convention between Russia and the United States fixing the parallel of 54 deg. 40 min. N. as the southern limit of the Russian sphere. This is practically the latitude of Port Simpson to-day.

But these negotiations had a significance far beyond the point immediately at issue. It was in this connection that President Monroe enunciated the famous doctrine of non-interference by European nations in the affairs of America, an utterance which has inspired the foreign policy of the United States ever since. It so greatly agitated England at the time that Canning at once entered into negotiations with Russia which led up to the Canning Convention.<sup>1</sup> This instrument practically bound Russia to the same limits southward to which she had agreed with the United States.

Russia continued in possession of Alaska until 1867, when the negotiations for purchase were concluded and it passed into the hands of the United States.

**The Treaty of Ghent.**—Still there was no settlement of boundaries with America. The Treaty of Ghent, which brought the war with England to a close in 1814, perpetuated the old evil of the Nootka Convention by recognising the equal rights of both nations to colonise the territory on the Pacific coast between the parallels of 44 deg. (midway in the present state of Oregon) and 55 deg. The clause was fraught with infinite trouble for the future, and evidently the negotiators hesitated to endeavour to effect a real settlement at the moment. For a quarter of a century it was a constant cause of dispute. It led, within a few years of the treaty, to a joint occupation of what is now the state of Washington, but was then vaguely termed "Oregon."

In 1846 the dispute became very warm, and during Polk's presidential campaign the popular battle-cry was "Fifty-four forty or fight." With the intention of entering into sovereign possession of the disputed territory, the United States

<sup>1</sup> *Hertslet's Treaties*, vol. iii., p. 362.



denounced the joint occupation arrangement, and there were all the elements of a collision. Britain offered to submit the matter to arbitration. The chauvinists south of the line demanded nothing less than the whole coast up to the boundary of the Russian territory.

Fortunately, when the presidential election was over the dispute lent itself to easy though not final adjustment. The Oregon Treaty was signed in June 1846 with comparatively little trouble and the frontier was set at the 49th parallel, the whole of Vancouver Island being assigned to Britain. Unfortunately the line was not delimited in detail, and a further dispute as to interpretation was settled in 1872 by the arbitrament of the German Emperor. The decision then was in favour of the United States, to whom San Juan and some small islands were handed over.<sup>1</sup>

**Vancouver a British Interest.**—In all these disputes and discussions the people of Canada showed little interest. And how could it be otherwise? They lived for the most part at least two thousand miles away. They had only small settlements of their countrymen on the Pacific sea-board, and these were rather the servants of a great company than free settlers. They had no political unity stretching from sea to sea. They certainly had no feeling that any interests which they were likely to value for many years to come were at stake.

Giving evidence on the government of Vancouver Island a few years later, Herman Merivale said he regarded its occupation as "simply an Imperial object with which the interest of Canada was not implicated. He could not see the slightest interest that Canada had in the question. If war had arisen British colonial policy in the common sense would have had a great deal to do with it, but not Canadian policy."<sup>2</sup> The obvious comment is that the Pacific coast was actually more remote from the Canadian provinces than England was. Vancouver was not even a back door to Canada.

**Vancouver Cold Shoulders a Governor.**—When in 1821 the North-West Company merged in the Hudson Bay Company, Dr John M'Loughlin persuaded one of its smartest clerks, John Douglas, to take service with the incoming regime. He rose to high position, and eventually became chief factor in British Columbia. He it was who

<sup>1</sup> For Canadian history see E. O. Scholefield's works on British Columbia.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1861, xiii., No. 423, Select Committee on Colonial Military Expenditure.

recommended Vancouver Island in 1842, and when it was ceded to the Company by proclamation seven years later he was put forward by the Company as lieutenant-governor, "merely as a temporary expedient until the colony can afford to pay a governor unconnected with the Hudson Bay Company" (Sir J. Pelly to the Colonial Office).

In the event the Government did not accept the nomination, but sent out an English barrister named Richard Blanshard, who had served the Colonial Office in other parts of the world. Blanshard arrived in March 1850, and by the act of reading his commission as Governor and Commander-in-chief of Vancouver Island he established the first British colony in the North Pacific.

But he had a very cool reception. This was by no means a colony by settlement of free persons. It was only an aggrandised factory of the Company, and Blanshard soon found that in such a community there was scarcely room for the representative of the Queen. Practically all the settlers were the Company's servants, and the Governor, treated socially as a stranger, had not the backing of force to maintain his position officially. The Colonial Office urged him to set up his council and proceed with his government. But he was already sick of his post, and he resigned it to the great regret of the growing body of independent settlers. Douglas was appointed governor in 1851, and he at once set up his council.

**Vancouver fears to be Great.**—The operations of the Hudson Bay Company practically locked up the Pacific coast of Canada. The Company's interests lay in the opposite direction, in conserving its forests and prairies for the furs which it marketed in Europe; and oversea trade, except what they did themselves with San Francisco and with the islands, was discouraged in every possible way.

When gold was discovered at Queen Charlotte's Sound, the world at large knew from what had happened in California and in Australia what was likely to happen in Vancouver. The Government in London was compelled to take some steps to improve the jurisdiction of the Queen, if it did not wish to see an Alsatia of disorder created in its own dominions. The drifting and unsettled population of the Californian fields looked northward. Ships were fitted out by adventurers and speculators to carry miners to Queen Charlotte's Sound, and a "rush" set in which threatened to carry the feeble little administration off its feet.

Douglas appealed to Earl Grey for instructions and

advice. Did the Government contemplate excluding foreign vessels from that part of the coast? he asked wistfully (Douglas to Grey, 31st October 1851). Grey thought it would be inexpedient to take such a step. But Douglas's anxiety was not allayed. Men were pouring in from Columbia and California, an immigration that he thought was altogether evil. They were free men, outside the service of the Company, and they were the sort of men one expected would prove lawless. It would "lead to serious difficulties with the natives," wrote Douglas. "The adventurers might possibly attempt to plunder the British trading posts on the neighbouring coasts;" they might "become formidable from the mere force of numbers," and put the Government to much trouble and expense in guarding national rights. He wanted American subjects forbidden to enter the settlement, on the ground that a scheme to colonise the island and establish an independent government was being freely discussed in the best informed circles in Oregon. Again, in his characteristic way, he demanded that the flourishing trade which he believed would arise should be led into the colony by restricting the carrying to national (? Canadian) ships.

**Timidity of the Colonial Office.**—Month by month from his lonely post Douglas penned premonitions of increasing gloom. And the Colonial Office was duly infected with alarm. It did not approve of reviving the old navigation laws for the benefit of a colony almost unborn, but it did prevail upon the Admiralty to send a vessel from the Pacific squadron to Esquimalt and Fort Rupert to protect "British interests against the depredations of Indians, or the unwarranted intrusion of foreigners on the Queen's territory."

The threatened trouble, however, came to an early and natural end. The goldfields proved a disappointment, and before the autumn of 1852 the rush had died away. Almost at that moment Douglas was arrayed in new powers as Governor of Vancouver Island and Lieutenant-Governor of Queen Charlotte Island, but he was distinctly warned that Her Majesty's Government had no intention "to sanction the impression that they may have any design of colonising the country or placing any establishment on it. The commission is issued solely to meet the circumstances of the times. It conveys to you no power to make laws or constitute a regular government, but it gives the party bearing it a position of authority as representing Her Majesty's Government in the district, which is both important and valuable" (Instructions from Colonial Office, 27th

September 1852). A somewhat similar commission was issued to Enderby for the Auckland Islands in 1849 (*q.v.*, p. 212).

But before very long the Colonial Office began to doubt the wisdom of leaving things so haphazard. Labouchere wrote in 1856 that authorities questioned whether "the Crown can legally convey authority to make laws in a settlement founded by Englishmen, even for a temporary and special purpose, to any legislature not elected wholly or in part by the settlers themselves." He was careful to say that he did not subscribe to that opinion, but nevertheless instructed Douglas to set up a council.<sup>1</sup> The House of Assembly duly met on 12th August 1856, and thus the irresponsible government of the Company, or of nominated officials, ended.

The development on the mainland brought the new province of British Columbia into being. In May 1858 Douglas confessed that, whether they liked it or not, there was evidently going to be a steady influx of white settlers into the region. The Imperial Government shared his view, and sent engineers and naval surveyors to select ports and lay out cities.<sup>2</sup>

In the sixties the Pacific sea-board of Canada was still of very limited Imperial importance, if we may judge from the fact that Sir W. F. D. Jervois, the celebrated military engineer, in his report on the defence of Canada, makes no allusion to it whatever.<sup>3</sup> But how could it be in advance of the United States, which only in 1864 voted its first subsidy for a steamer service across the Pacific? There was no impelling motive to cause the Canadians of the western sea-board to look across the Pacific either for trade or for economic dangers. China and Japan were still sleeping soundly within their borders. It was only in 1865 that the British Order-in-Council was passed to provide jurisdiction over British subjects in those empires.

**No International Outlook.**—The national spirit in British Columbia could not be expected to show itself in the severely strenuous days of the pioneer. British Columbia and Vancouver could not even agree upon uniting into a considerable colonial unit, and it was left to Lord Carnarvon to lay down the conditions of their fusion and to enforce it by Imperial statute.<sup>4</sup>

With the project of a transcontinental railway, the British Government itself first commenced to look upon the Pacific

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1857-8, Sess. II., No. 229.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1859, No. 2476.

<sup>3</sup> P.P. 1865, No. 3434.

<sup>4</sup> P.P. 1866, No. 3852.



parts of Canada from an Imperial point of view. Granville impressed the project upon Governor Musgrave in 1862 as one of the most cogent reasons in favour of British Columbia joining the Canadian confederation:—

“It is evident,” he said, “that the talk of a British line of communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans is far more feasible by the operations of a single government responsible for the progress of both shores of the continent than by a bargain negotiated between separate—perhaps in some respects rival—governments and legislatures. The San Francisco of British North America would under these circumstances hold a greater commercial and political position than would be attainable by the capital of the isolated colony of British Columbia.”<sup>1</sup>

And so in 1871 British Columbia joined the federation, on the understanding that the Dominion should construct a line from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

**The Chinese Question.**—The line was completed in 1885, but long before this an active immigration of Asiatics compelled the Pacific province to think beyond her borders and beyond the Pacific. Largely in connection with the railway works, about 25,000 Chinese labourers had found their way into Western Canada. The province, restive and chafing under the influx, was debarred by the federal constitution from legislating in its own defence, but it passed resolutions urgently soliciting the intervention of the Dominion. The difficulty was overcome, and the chief interest of the incident is that it left Western Canada still without a Pacific policy.

**The Pacific Naval Bases.**—Nor did the next decade or two develop any keener interest in the affairs of the Pacific coast. The geographical position of Esquimalt and the proximity of fine coal measures plainly indicated it as a naval base for the British forces in the north Pacific. But Canada itself had no interest in the matter, and said quite plainly that as it could do without a naval station it should not be called upon to contribute to the cost.

For some years the matter was discussed on the basis of a partnership, but no result was reached. Canada insisted in 1889 that if the Dominion erected fortifications Great Britain would have to maintain the garrisons. The rise of the Russian naval power on the far shores of the Pacific, and the growth of settlement in British Columbia did not convince Canada that her interests and liabilities in this



direction were any greater in 1890 than they were when the naval station was established thirty years earlier.

Dilke pointedly remarks<sup>1</sup> that "if Canada were as inclined to protect herself as is Australia, she would have amply defended both Esquimalt and Burrard inlet." But Canada still smarted under the supposed betrayal of her interests to Imperial considerations, and felt frankly that the only wars she was likely to be involved in were those of England.

In 1889 an Imperial contract was signed with the Canadian Pacific Railway for the conveyance of mails and stores across the Dominion and thence across the Pacific to Hongkong. No other interests were involved than the provision of a right-of-way through Canada.<sup>2</sup>

**The North Pacific Fisheries.**—It is purely a matter of conjecture how far the indifference of Canada to Pacific affairs was intensified by the management of the Alaska boundary dispute, and what would have been the attitude of Canada if Great Britain instead of the United States had been the purchaser of the Alaska territory. The settlement of the boundary, as finally agreed to, does seriously affect the economic future of the great north-west of Canada, a future which cannot be estimated, by shutting it off from the sea-board except by traversing the territory and the fiscal system of a foreign nation. The same act delivered over to another power littoral fisheries of very great value, which should normally be the preserve of the nation peopling the prairies of the hinterland.

But these conditions are historic. The roots of the hardship were planted long before Great Britain could have prevented the trouble. It is only in the adjustment of the disputes they gave rise to that Canada can reasonably hold England accountable for any supposed weakness or sacrifice of Dominion interests. But that is not a matter for discussion here. What is evident is the fact that Canada must be a Pacific power as well as an Atlantic. Her sea-board is still a considerable one, with many fine harbours and valuable fisheries, and she must inevitably have a large maritime population and an important maritime policy in the Pacific.

The first mark of recognition of that fact is to be found, perhaps, in the decision at the naval defence conference in 1909 to provide Canadian naval units for both the Atlantic

<sup>1</sup> *Problems of Greater Britain*, by C. W. Dilke, vol. i., p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1889, No. 263.

and the Pacific, and naval bases on each side of the Dominion. The suggestion made at this conference was that naval units supplied by Australia, New Zealand, and Canada should co-operate in safeguarding British interests in the Pacific. That it was not taken up more enthusiastically by Canada was probably due in part to the feeling that Canada's chief effort must necessarily be in the Atlantic—towards the chief menace for the time being—and in part to the political uncertainty in Canada itself, which resulted in the cancellation for the time at least of the fine contribution offered some time earlier to the Imperial Navy.<sup>1</sup>

Canada must be a Pacific power, but a consciousness of this fact is not likely to evolve itself at a moment when Canada's whole energy and enthusiasm are being thrown into a struggle in the Old World. That she can take an interest in Pacific questions is clear from the very important part she played in a very important episode of Pacific policy, the all-red cable.

**Pelagic Sealing.**—The discussions on the problem of pelagic sealing, which lasted for several decades, involved both Canada and New Zealand. Scientists came to the conclusion that the home of the seal was in the South Pacific, where in seventy years 16,000,000 fur seals had been captured, and that the supply north of the equator, where only 5,000,000 seals were captured in 110 years, was derived from the overflow from the south.

The Pelagic Sealing Convention of 1911 was held up for some time at the urgent request of New Zealand that it should apply only to waters north of the equator. New Zealand had for many years observed close seasons in the South Pacific to preserve the seals, and she insisted on maintaining her authority to do so.

In the event Japan, Russia, Great Britain, and the United States contracted to close the sealing in the North Pacific for fifteen years.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1909, No. Cd. 4948.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. N.Z. 1912, Sess. II., A. 2.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PROTECTORATE OF TONGA

**Discovery and Settlement.**—The Tonga, or Friendly Islands, with their centre about 20 deg. S. and 175 deg. W. are 1100 miles north-east of Auckland, and 400 miles east-south-east of Fiji. They have an area of about 390 square miles and a population estimated in 1915 at 24,326, including less than a thousand whites.

Tasman discovered the Tonga Islands in 1643. They were first settled by missionaries of the London Missionary Society in 1797, but before these tradesmen and artisans could convert the natives to the value of their crafts they had to leave owing to hostility.

One of the most warlike and virile branches of the Polynesian race, the Tongans were the most powerful during the nineteenth century, and overran in turn several of the neighbouring groups. Their demeanour towards the whites was all the more arrogant by reason of their successes in war; and yet another party of missionaries, from New South Wales, made an unsuccessful attempt to establish themselves. It was not until 1826 that the Rev. J. Thomas, sent out by the Wesleyan Missionary Committee in London, made a successful start. The following year a great chief built a chapel and renounced paganism, and in 1830 King George Tubou became a Christian. Such progress did the new religion make that the pagans in 1837 entered upon a series of wars with the object of ousting it from the realm.

**An Unhappy Intervention.**—In 1840, when the Christians were still in a minority, Captain W. Croker, of H.M.S. *Favorite*, permitted himself to be drawn into hostilities on their behalf. In an attempt to storm a fort his landing party suffered defeat, and Croker and several of his officers and men were killed. In the circumstances of the intervention the British Government decided not to punish the Tongans, but merely

to demand the return of the lost guns. It was a sequel not very flattering to British prestige, and it served to elate the arrogance of the natives.

The wars were still raging when Commodore Wilkes visited Tonga, and he satisfied himself they were the result of the inordinate zeal of the Christians to force their tenets on the pagans. King George, called in from another island to succour the Christians, was now himself striving for the hegemony of the group. He was personally triumphant and therefore reluctant to accept the proffered American mediation; for the Christians now felt confident that they were numerous enough to impose Christianity on the pagans or to exterminate them.

In 1848, the Christians being victorious, one of their chiefs, Maafu, landed in Fiji and placed himself at the head of the Christian movement there. Such prestige did the Tongan warriors enjoy that he was in a good way to become paramount chief of Fiji, when his rival, Thakombau, sought a way out of his difficulties by offering the sovereignty to Great Britain.

**Roman Catholics Appear.**—The descent of the Roman Catholic missionaries on Tonga was similar to the incidents at Tahiti and Hawaii. In 1837 the king declined to allow Bishop Pompallier to settle in Tonga. Three years later a French frigate appeared with the customary ultimatum requiring the Tongans to accept French teachers as they had accepted English and American, and adding a significant reference to what had occurred at Tahiti.

Shortly afterwards the bishop himself appeared in a schooner, but the chiefs remained firm in their objection. Their Christianity was a good deal more militant than that of the other islanders, and their veto prevailed. At last in 1843, through the medium of Tongans who had been converted at the French seminary on Wallis Island, the Roman Catholics gained a footing. In the following year King George, fearing a repetition of what had occurred in other native kingdoms, petitioned England for protection. The Report of the Wesleyan Missionary Society for 1846 remarks that "the missionaries were greatly cheered by an official letter received from H.B.M. Consul-General in a neighbouring group, assuring them that Great Britain would protect her subjects in the Friendly and the Fiji Islands."

**A Civilised Constitution.**—The Christianisation of Tonga had most satisfactory results in the social life of the people.

The king ruled by a constitution drawn up by a Wesleyan missionary, and, considering that his ministers were all native Tongans, he ruled most creditably. Captain Douglas, of H.M.S. *Cossack*, who visited Tonga in 1872 and saluted King George with the twenty-one guns of an independent sovereign, said the appearance of the place and the natives did much credit to the government. Fencing and roading were general, and there was a widespread air of industry, stability, and civilisation.

Here, too, civilisation brought some evils in strange guises. Cricket came to Tonga first of all the Pacific Islands, so that in after years the true cricket of Samoa was "*fa'a Tonga*" (Tonga style). Here, too, the craze became so extravagant that in order to avert famine as the result of neglect of the plantations it had to be prohibited on six days of the week.<sup>1</sup>

**International Relations.**—Such a kingdom must perforce have international relations. It was as early as 1879 that the first European treaty was signed, and Germany by that instrument obtained the right of a coaling station in Tonga. The fine harbour of Vavau, with its central situation in Polynesia, was an important consideration. The High Commissioner for the Western Pacific followed closely in the wake of the Germans, and before the year was out had secured for Great Britain and British subjects all that had been granted to Germans. When he arrived, the King of Tonga had just been presented with a portrait of the first Kaiser, and there were other marks of Teutonic favour.

Gordon's treaty of friendship and reciprocity was signed on 29th November 1879. It gave most-favoured-nation treatment to Britain: it made British subjects residing in Tonga amenable to the High Commissioner's court for criminal offences under British law, and to the Tongan courts for offences against Tongan law. Britain for her part agreed to extradite Tongan subjects accused or convicted of murder (attempted or actual), embezzlement, larceny, fraudulent bankruptcy, or forgery.<sup>2</sup>

The United States concluded a treaty in 1886 very similar to the British one, but making provision also for free access to Tongan ports for "all steam vessels which may be employed by the Government of the United States in the carrying of their mails in and across the Pacific

<sup>1</sup> Article "King George of Tonga," in *The Times*, 3rd May 1918.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1882, C. 3400.



Ocean." It was finally proclaimed on 18th September 1888.<sup>1</sup>

**Demand for an Independent Church.**—The troubles at Tonga in the eighties are an interesting example of the position a mission is liable to take up in these quasi-civilised native kingdoms. Tonga was civilised by a Wesleyan mission, and in the later stages became the especial care of the New South Wales and Queensland Conference of the Wesleyan Church. In view of the distance of Tonga from Australia, and of the strong individuality of the Tongan people, it is not surprising that a demand arose for an independent and separate organisation. And in 1874 the Tongan Government moved the conference in that direction. Evidently the conference did not realise how grave was the discontent in the islands, due chiefly to the annual withdrawal of large sums of money subscribed by Tongan church people for the work of missions elsewhere. At any rate it took no action.

The chairman of the Tonga district at that time was one Shirley Waldemar Baker, and as the result of an inquiry in 1879 the Conference of 1880 recalled him. This greatly incensed the king, who was much attached to his missionary. He again asked that Tonga should be made an independent district, and when the matter was postponed for a year he issued a proclamation calling on his people not to subscribe further to the funds of the church.

The Conference then demanded Baker's resignation. He resigned at once, but accepted the post of prime minister to the king. A few months later the Conference, sitting at Adelaide, granted what had been asked urgently in 1874, and removed Tonga from the control of the Board of Missions.

**Missionary Premier's Persecutions.**—But the concession was too late to be graceful. The king, strongly abetted by Baker, had his mind fixed on absolute separation. He demanded the complete control of Tonga as a district of New Zealand. The High Commissioner (*Des Voeux*) realising that Baker was responsible for the trouble, wished in 1883 to deport him, but was overruled by the Colonial Office. The friction with the church authorities in Australia continued, and in 1884, before a commission from New Zealand could reach Tonga to make inquiries, Baker started in Haapai a Free Wesleyan Church.

The king appealed to all who loved him to join the new

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Sen. Docs., 61st Congress, 2nd Sess., vol. xlviii., p. 1781.

church. The great bulk of the people did so, as a matter of loyalty, but a small faction remained true to their old church. In doctrine and constitution they were exactly the same, and Baker was consequently able to persuade the king that those who refused to join the Free Church were disloyal to him. A reign of cruelty, outrage, and oppression supervened. The devoted adherents of the old church were beaten and deported and treated with unexampled cruelty, and neither the king nor Baker intervened on their behalf. Certain laws of settlement were also enacted to put pressure on the nonconformists. Baker could undoubtedly have prevented the cruelties if he had not actually instigated them. His own conduct was plainly tyrannical and harsh, and in place of that ordered constitutional government which had been the pride of Tonga and the admiration of visitors, the old form of absolutism was revived.

Finally, an attempt on the life of the missionary-premier precipitated, early in 1887, a wholesale plundering of the Wesleyans of Tongatabu by their old enemies of Haapai, supposedly under the patronage of the king.

**The High Commissioner Intervenes.**—Under this continued persecution most of the members of the Wesleyan Church went over to the Free Church. Only a small devoted remnant of ninety people still held out, and on them Baker and his accomplices visited their anger the more ferociously in the hope of exterminating the old church root and branch. At this stage the British consul intervened, and on his urgent appeal the Government of Fiji provided an asylum for the unfortunates, an interesting requital of the benefits brought to Fiji itself by the Christian warriors of Tonga half a century earlier.

Sir Charles Mitchell, the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, visited Tonga forthwith to hold an inquiry into the trouble. After an exhaustive investigation he persuaded the king to restore freedom of worship to the Wesleyans, and to restrain the excesses of his chiefs. Of Baker's conduct he formed a very damning opinion, and he only desisted from deporting him in the belief that he would be a useful help to the king in restoring order. Sir Charles was convinced of the absolute loyalty of Tongans of all classes, including the persecuted remnant, to the person and throne of King George, a loyalty due chiefly to the great benefits the kingdom had reaped from his wise constitution.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5106: Report by Sir Charles Mitchell on the Affairs of Tonga.

**Shirley Baker Deported.**—The evil influence of Baker did not cease to make itself felt even after the restoration of rights to the Wesleyan Church. Before many years had passed the old abuses appeared again, and the Tongan officials were repudiating the written promises of their sovereign. A fresh inquiry was held by Thurston, who found Baker fully responsible, and an order was issued forbidding him to be within the group for two years from 17th July 1890. Meanwhile he was dismissed from the Government, and under a native premier (Tukuaho) full freedom was once more guaranteed to the erstwhile exiles, who were repatriated.

**Closer Relations.**—The intervention of the High Commissioner was the prelude to a closer relationship with Great Britain. With the strong hand of Baker removed it was necessary to provide from time to time some administrative help for the native government. King George Tubou died in 1893 full of years and honour, and was succeeded by his great-grandson, George Taufaaahu, who assumed the title of King George Tubou II. He was only twenty-one years of age, a young man who had been educated at Auckland and showed considerable personality and character.

The treaty interests which Germany had acquired twenty years earlier she renounced by the Convention of November 1899 in favour of Great Britain. Her Majesty's Government was too preoccupied elsewhere, and had too little desire for annexations in the Pacific to do more than take precautions against foreign interference. New Zealand was chiefly interested in Tonga, and Seddon demanded that steps should be taken to secure the group forthwith. Chamberlain was not disposed to go so fast, but he did send down a commissioner (Mr Basil H. Thomson, C.B.) in the following year to negotiate a regular treaty of protection.

**The Protectorate.**—The finances of Tonga fell into some disorder in succeeding years, and another intervention by the High Commissioner was called for in 1904-5 to adjust them. Again the old powers of the Orders-in-Council were invoked for the deportation of the offending ministers.

Since then the progress of Tonga has been steady though quiet. The old penchant for education has been revived, and a good general standard of learning is now universal.

The revenue and expenditure in recent years is shown in this table :—

		Revenue.	Expenditure.
1911	. . .	£51,050	£50,011
1915	. . .	30,037	43,086

Less than half the revenue is from customs duties. The imports and exports were:—

	Imports.	Exports.
1912 . . .	£193,013	£216,512
1915 . . .	114,075	103,951

Practically the whole of the exports is copra.

The death of King George Tubou II. in 1918 and the accession of his daughter, the Princess Salote, seem to foreshadow the early termination of the protectorate and possibly the annexation of Tonga to New Zealand. British intervention in the affairs of the group necessarily increased during the great war, and several New Zealand officials have been employed in different departments of the Government.

## CHAPTER XIV

### NEW ZEALAND AND ITS DEPENDENCIES

**The Repudiation of Sovereignty.**—The repudiation of sovereignty in the Pacific, after it had been proclaimed by the English navigators, came to a head in the first instance in New Zealand. Tasman, the Dutch seaman, discovered New Zealand in 1642, and in the belief that it was part of the great polar continent which his countrymen Schouten and Le Maire had already discovered and named Staaten Land, he gave it that name also. He sailed away without landing anywhere, though he endeavoured to do so in Murderers Bay, Nelson. A few months later the separate existence of Staaten Land was well authenticated, and Tasman's discovery was then renamed "New Zealand," after one of the states of Holland.

When British interests had grown to considerable proportions and the British colony of missionaries, traders, and settlers had become too large to be controlled by a tribal native regime, the Colonial Office, wedded to the conviction that the only duty of England in the Pacific was towards the native races, declined year after year to make any advance. Private associations had long since demanded that the sovereignty of Great Britain should come in to protect the English missions and the English colonists. For, whether it was acceptable or not, colonists would go there. The Colonial Office essayed first to carry out its obligations by recognising the native "sovereignty," and to restrain its own subjects from acts of aggression and fraud against the natives by means of a resident.

James Busby arrived in 1833 to take up this position. In informing the chiefs of the step it was proposed to take, Goderich wrote (14th June 1832) that Busby would investigate all complaints they might make to him, and would endeavour to prevent the arrival amongst them of men who had been guilty of crimes in their own country—a reference, of course,



to the escape of convicts from New South Wales and Tasmania. In consideration of the anxious desire which would be shown by the resident for the protection of the natives, they for their part were expected to show him a proper obedience and support, so that they might reap the full benefit of the friendship and alliance with Great Britain.

**A Consul with no Power.**—Busby was given no more real power than our consuls of the same period in Fiji and Samoa—so little, indeed, that he was often referred to as a man-of-war without guns. He was not even able to control British subjects—the avowed object of his appointment. Here, as elsewhere, the missionaries were openly hostile to the introduction of British sovereignty, for the very human reason that it would tend to detract from the position of influence, almost of power, which they themselves held with the natives. It is true that in New Zealand the missionaries never became the actual rulers that they were in Tahiti, but by their example of life and their dissemination of religion and civilised crafts they acquired year by year a position of influence to which they were morally entitled.

**The Declaration of Independence.**—The principle of recognising the independence of native states was early expounded in New Zealand. When Busby had been there as resident for two years he was much alarmed at receiving from “a person who styles himself Charles, Baron de Thierry, Sovereign Chief of New Zealand and King of Nukuhiva, a formal declaration of his intention to establish in his own person an independent sovereignty in this country, which intention, he states, he has declared to their Majesties the Kings of Great Britain and France, and to the President of the United States.”<sup>1</sup>

Busby appealed to his compatriots to use all their influence with the Maori “to inspire both chiefs and people with a spirit of most determined resistance to the landing of a person on their shores who comes with the avowed object of usurping a sovereignty over them.” For his own part he convened a meeting of the chiefs at Waitangi “to advise them of what was due to themselves and their country,” and the upshot was the Declaration of Independence of the United Tribes of New Zealand, which was signed on 28th October 1835. William IV. had already presented the Maori with a flag, and in this declaration they entreated “that he will continue to be the parent of their infant state,

<sup>1</sup> Mr Busby’s “Address to His Countrymen,” 10th October 1835.

and that he will become its Protector from all attempts upon its independence."<sup>1</sup>

New Zealand was then within the extended boundaries of the Colony of New South Wales, and Glenelg instructed Sir Richard Bourke, governor of that colony, that "it would be proper that the chiefs should be assured, in His Majesty's name, that he will not fail to avail himself of every opportunity of showing his goodwill, and of affording to those chiefs such support and protection as may be consistent with a due regard to the just rights of others, and to the interests of His Majesty's subjects."<sup>2</sup>

There were no other assemblies of the chiefs, and the proposed parliament never essayed to legislate for the infant state. But when at length in 1839 the Colonial Office was forced to approach the question of establishing British sovereignty in New Zealand, it proceeded on the assumption that the sovereignty recognised by William IV. was a real one, and instructed its envoy Hobson to negotiate as consul before developing into a lieutenant-governor.

While James Stephen ruled at the Colonial Office the missionary interest—not merely in the Pacific—was paramount in colonial policy. The act of William IV. recognising the so-called Confederation of Tribes was perhaps more flattering to the missionaries than to the chiefs themselves. There was no conception of sovereignty amongst the Maori. The system of government was tribal, and the supremacy of the tribes moved here and there with the changes in their military power. Nor did even the most pronounced supremacy in historic times extend over more than a very limited number of tribes.

**The Native Sovereignty.**—Stephen admitted frankly that the appointment of a resident did not answer its purpose, and in 1838 we find him proposing to the Foreign Office, with the same high respect for the fiction of a native autonomy, that "an officer vested with the character and powers of a consul should be appointed" (Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 12th December 1838).<sup>3</sup>

As it happened, no consul was appointed. The New Zealand Association, urged on by the hot-headed coloniser, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, insisted on sending out an expedition to purchase land from the natives and to found a colony, and at the same time came news of a French colonising expedition about to leave on the same purpose. Captain Hobson, R.N., was accordingly sent out in 1839 to be British

<sup>1</sup> For text see p. 313.

<sup>2</sup> 25th May 1836.

<sup>3</sup> P.P. 1840, xlvii.

consul in New Zealand and lieutenant-governor of any territory of which the sovereignty might be ceded to Queen Victoria. His commission as consul he never made use of, partly owing to a dispute with Captain Nias, of H.M.S. *Herald*, as to the salute to which he was entitled on landing. When he did land, on January 1840, at Bay of Islands, he issued his proclamations as "lieutenant-governor of the British settlements in progress in New Zealand," under a commission extending the limits of the Colony of New South Wales to comprehend "any territory of which the sovereignty has been or may be acquired by Her Majesty in New Zealand" (Governor Sir G. Gipps to Captain Hobson, R.N.).<sup>1</sup>

**The Treaty of Waitangi.**—Hobson's proceedings on landing were strictly limited by the assumption that New Zealand was in fact the constituted sovereign state which had been recognised both in the appointment of the resident and in the Declaration of the United Tribes. After duly negotiating with the chiefs, he obtained their signatures to a treaty of cession which he regarded as "a full and clear recognition of the sovereign rights of Her Majesty over the northern parts of this island" (Hobson to Gipps, 6th February 1840). And on the following day he proclaimed the sovereignty and saluted it with twenty-one guns.

The Treaty of Waitangi,<sup>2</sup> as this instrument is called, is one of the most remarkable documents in British colonial history. It was concluded on an equality between Great Britain on the one hand, and on the other a collection of native tribes living in a state of savagery which could not compare with that of the quasi-civilised Hawaiians of 1842. It was not a free cession of sovereignty, but covenanted the Queen to accord the Maori people certain rights and privileges, some of which were subject to the constant fortunes of war in their native state. What these involved neither the framer of the treaty nor the British Government can have understood, for the communal system of the New Zealanders had not been studied. Nevertheless the Treaty of Waitangi has been scrupulously honoured by the whites to the present day, often at great sacrifice of their own interests. This outstanding observance of justice and national obligations has not only had a most important effect on the national life of the New Zealand people, but it has contributed largely to giving the natives of New Zealand equal rights of citizenship with the whites, and

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1840, xxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 314.

enabling them to survive the advent of a preponderating white population.

Incidentally the treatment of the Maori people by the white settlers of New Zealand has given that dominion the best claim to administer the Polynesian groups which are under British sovereignty. One of them, the Cook Islands, has already been annexed.

**Completing the Sovereignty.**—It does not appear to have been in contemplation that the whole of New Zealand should be proclaimed British territory. But before he had secured all the signatures of North Island chiefs to the Treaty of Waitangi, Hobson received intelligence which determined him to complete the sovereignty over the whole group.

At the southern end of the North Island the expedition sent out by the New Zealand Company had established itself on the site of the present capital city of Wellington, and had elected a form of council for local government which Hobson conceived to be republican, and therefore tantamount to an act of defiance of the authority of the Queen. In the South Island, also, a small group of French whalers at Akaroa had acquired landed rights and were expecting the arrival of a shipload of emigrants sent out by the French company before mentioned, under convoy of a corvette.

"Deeming it advisable," Hobson wrote to the Secretary of State (25th May 1840), "notwithstanding the measures I had taken to secure the adherence of the chiefs, to display the dignity and importance of government in a more ostensible manner than could be done by private individuals,"

he despatched Major Bunbury in the *Herald* to hoist the flag at various points to the southward. Before this work was completed the lieutenant-governor, on 21st May, proclaimed the sovereignty of the Queen over the whole of the country, on the assumption that as regards the occupied lands all the chiefs would sign the treaty, and as regards unoccupied lands the British claim was good by discovery and by actual occupation.

**The Chatham Islands.**—This small group, lying about 480 miles east-south-east from Wellington, fell within the original boundaries of New Zealand. Discovered by Lieutenant Broughton, R.N., in 1790, and named after his vessel, they attracted the usual occasional visits of whalers and sealers.



In 1841 the New Zealand Company, claiming them as coming within their purchase from the Maori, proposed to sell them to a German firm on condition that they were not made a penal settlement and were always free to British shipping.<sup>1</sup> The Attorney-General of England, however, condemned the Company's claim and the negotiations fell through. Nevertheless many Germans went there, under the influence of the North German Mission Society. In 1867 one-fifth of the 115 white residents at the Chathams were Germans.

The Chathams are administered as part of New Zealand, and are attached to one of the electorates of the South Island. Their population is largely engaged in sheep-farming and fishing.

**Expanded Boundaries.**—New Zealand's claim to control any of the neighbouring groups in the Pacific had been placed beyond question since the Samoa dispute of 1884-5 by the progress and contentment of her own native population. When the Samoa Convention extinguished all other German claims in this region of the Pacific, Seddon made a determined demand that New Zealand should be permitted to take in hand the administration of all the islands thus left to British influence.

Chamberlain readily agreed to the Cook Islands being absorbed. Their people were closely related to the Maori, and spoke almost the same language. They had petitioned in 1864 to be annexed, and their sympathies were entirely British. The way having been prepared by a resolution in the New Zealand Parliament, the arikis of the group petitioned for annexation in 1900.<sup>2</sup> The inclusion of the Cook group in the boundaries of New Zealand was effected by an Order-in-Council in May 1901 under the authority of the Colonial Boundaries Act, 1895; and the change came into force the following month.<sup>3</sup>

Under the New Zealand act for the administration of the group the Federal Parliament previously existing is continued. Each island is governed by a council of nine members, the Resident Agent of New Zealand Government being ex-officio president. The Federal Council is presided over by the Resident Commissioner for the group. No ordinance has validity until assented to by the Govern-

<sup>1</sup> See reports of the New Zealand Company in Public Record Office: also, "The Making of a Nation," article in *New Zealand Times*, by G. H. Scholfield, 13th March 1907.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. N.Z. 1900, A 37.

<sup>3</sup> P.P. N.Z. 1901, A 3g.



ment of New Zealand, which can also apply to the islands any New Zealand law it cares to.

There is a regular steamer service to the Cook group, and in 1918 Rarotonga was linked with New Zealand by wireless.

Close to the Cook Islands is the outpost of Niue, or Savage Island, where German interests existed until 1899 which prevented British authority being set up. By the Samoa Convention Germany renounced her interests here, and the island was annexed to New Zealand in 1901. The natives of Niue are distinct from those of Rarotonga, and are of a roving disposition, so that of a population of 4500 about one-ninth are usually abroad in other Pacific islands. The principal industry of Niue is plaiting hats. There is a separate government with a Resident Commissioner.

## CHAPTER XV

### OCEAN OUTPOSTS

**The Auckland Islands.**—An interesting but unimportant episode in the New Zealand orbit was enacted in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Auckland Islands, which lie in latitude 50 deg. 32 min. S. and longitude 166 deg. 13 min. E., 290 miles south of the Bluff, were discovered in 1806 by Captain Bristow in the whaling ship *Ocean*, which belonged to Samuel Enderby. Revisiting them in the following year in the *Sarah*, Bristow took formal possession in the name of King George III. During the succeeding decade they were freely visited by whalers and sealers, but no established settlement was formed.

Formally included by the letters-patent of April 1842 in the boundaries of New Zealand,<sup>1</sup> the Auckland Islands were still governed direct from the Colonial Office. It was from Downing Street that a lease of the islands was granted in March 1847 to Charles Enderby, son of Samuel, on behalf of himself and Henry and George. Two years later the Southern Whale Fishery Company was formed to develop these rights, and Charles Enderby was sent out with full powers to carry out the intentions of the scheme.<sup>2</sup>

**The Antarctic Prince of Whales.**—Enderby arrived at Port Ross in December 1849. There were then fifty-one persons in the Company's employ, and seventy natives had arrived from the Chathams a few years earlier. All were engaged on the work of the Company. To govern this little community Enderby had been granted by the Colonial Office a commission as lieutenant-governor, responsible direct to Downing Street. In his early reports he expressed the usual confidence of a company promoter that the group

<sup>1</sup> *The Constitutional History and Law of New Zealand*, by Dr J. Hight and Dr H. D. Bamford.

<sup>2</sup> *The Auckland Islands*, by Charles Enderby, 1849.

would not involve the Imperial exchequer in any expense, and would even confer benefits on the adjacent colonies.

The Company did not succeed. Not only was it soon in financial difficulties, but in 1850 we find Enderby significantly asking the Colonial Office how he should deal with cases which would be punishable by transportation if such powers existed. Earl Grey replied (18th December 1850):—

“You were fully informed before leaving England that in the absence of any parliamentary provision no regular government with full powers could be established in these islands until the settlers become sufficiently numerous to allow of English institutions being adapted to their situation. You must deal with offences of a more serious description, should they unfortunately occur, to the best of your ability according to the law of England, summoning a jury of settlers if it should be absolutely necessary.”<sup>1</sup>

For a year or two the Company struggled on, and in 1851 we find Bishop Selwyn jocularly looking forward to a visit to the “Antarctic Prince of Whales,” the Auckland Islands being in his diocese.<sup>2</sup> In that year a commission was sent out by the Company to investigate the conduct of its affairs on the spot. After a long and rancorous dispute Enderby in January 1852 resigned his post under the Company and his appointment as lieutenant-governor, nominating a gentleman to carry out the duties of magistrate. A few months later the settlement was abandoned, and H.M.S. *Fantome* was sent down to supervise the evacuation.

**A Parallel with Vancouver.**—Enderby’s proclamation of abdication contained bitter complaints of the insults to which he had been subjected in his public and official capacity, insults which he had no power to resist since the whole of the population of the islands was in the pay of the Company. Consequently he had ceased to exercise the duties of his office until he should be able to enforce them. He went to Wellington and appealed to Sir George Grey for support. Grey felt compelled to recognise him as lieutenant-governor until his commission was revoked, but tactfully declined to take any part in the quarrel with the Company, or to incur the expense of sending Enderby back to his jurisdiction.

In this Earl Grey concurred. Enderby, he said, was fully aware that his appointment as lieutenant-governor was issued at his own request, and entirely in connection with the design of his company for making use of the islands.

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1852-3, No. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Tucker’s *Life of Selwyn*.

"That design having come to a termination, you must, without any expression of opinion as to the merits of the case between himself and the Company, warn him to abstain from any exercise of authority under the commission of which he has tendered the resignation." The government of the islands would probably be established in due course for the protection of the natives, but Her Majesty's Government had no present intention of maintaining an establishment there of any kind.<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact, the Aucklands had no native population, but the Colonial Office was on traditional ground in making such a promise. Since then the group has been administered by New Zealand. It has been settled periodically by sealers, whalers, and sheep-farmers from New Zealand, and by the last has been made quite successful. Government steamers from New Zealand pay periodical visits to replenish the depots for shipwrecked seamen and to deliver stores, and there are other means of communicating with New Zealand during the wool season.

Port Ross, at the northern end of the main island, is a fine spacious harbour, and is described by D'Urville as one of the best harbours of refuge in the world.

**The Line Islands.**—The Anglo-German agreement of 1886 placed in the British sphere of influence two small but interesting groups of the Line Islands, the Gilberts and the Ellice Islands. Chiefly coral atolls, they stretch from 5 deg. N. latitude to 10 deg. S., and from 170 to 180 E., outcrops of a reef which connects the Fiji system with that of the Marshall Islands. The total land area is only 180 square miles, and the population at the end of 1915 did not exceed 32,000.

It was purely to protect the native from the depredations of the blackbirders and the abuses of the beach-combers that England intervened in these fierce and inhospitable islands—in the Gilberts in 1896 and in Ellice in 1897. Ocean Island came into the administration in 1900 for quite a different reason. It possesses valuable deposits of guano, which it was proposed to develop by license granted to an English company. Merely for convenience it was attached to the neighbouring administration, to the revenues of which it soon provided the bulk of the income.

**A Creditable Native Administration.**—There are twenty-four main islands in the Gilbert and Ellice colony, and each

<sup>1</sup> Early in 1853 Enderby was again seeking appointment as lieutenant-governor in view of the Aucklands becoming a penal settlement.

of them is governed by a native council under the oversight of the resident—very much the system in vogue in the Cook Islands. Each native council, or *kaubure*, keeps its own scribe and its own police. There has been so far a sad lack of supervision owing to the resident commissioner having no means of visiting the islands except at rare intervals; yet the reports show that the native government has worked remarkably efficiently. The High Commissioner's assistant in 1909 stated that though the books kept by the native councils in the different islands showed certain errors in method, there was not a single case of deficiency in the money, "a circumstance which redounds greatly to the credit of the native officials concerned."<sup>1</sup> The besetting sin of favouritism led at an early stage to the abolition of the post of *uea*, or high chief of the islands.

The administration is in accordance with a code of laws drawn up by Sir J. B. Thurston in 1894, and the result of establishing the protectorate has been altogether for the benefit of the native population. Whereas there was continual fighting, varied by murders and burning of food crops, a few years of British administration produced perfect order. In the six years 1901-6 there were only four murders, and all the offenders were brought to justice. Planting and land reclamation were continuously progressing, poverty was unknown, and there was complete security for person and property. Housing was greatly developed, and the villages were kept in excellent condition. The only disturbance to the pristine simplicity of the islands was that caused by the attractions of the great European colony at Ocean Island.

**The Labour Question.**—It was due to the exertions of Thurston that the recruiting of Gilbert and Ellice islanders for work in the plantations of Samoa and Fiji was discontinued. His denunciation of the traffic was based on humanitarian grounds. Not only was the change from the equatorial atolls to the subtropical plantations ruinous to health, but the removal of large numbers of able-bodied men laid the remainder open to constant attacks from neighbouring islands.

When Ocean Island with its guano deposits was added to the protectorate, the Gilbert and Ellice islanders were freely indentured for work there; but for one reason or another this migration lost its attractiveness. Either the natives acquired a competence, or they found life at home

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1909, Cd. 4992.



so much improved by the new régime that they ceased to offer themselves for the work. The guano is now worked almost entirely by European skilled labour and Japanese coolies.<sup>1</sup>

Though each of the islands had previously made a contribution from its surplus to the funds of the administration, the inclusion of Ocean Island in the protectorate in 1900 was a great boon financially. The revenue of the protectorate increased from £2554 in 1901 to £4345 in 1906, and £30,273 in 1913. Of the exports, which in 1914 were valued at £349,250, phosphates from Ocean Island accounted for £300,000.

**A Crown Colony.**—In 1908 the headquarters of the Government was transferred to Ocean Island, and since 1909 the revenues from the phosphate workings have been credited to the funds of the colony. The protectorate was incorporated in the Empire as a Crown colony in November 1915, and by a subsequent order Union, Fanning, and Washington were added to the colony. The Union Islands, three in number, with a population of about a thousand, are in 9 deg. S. latitude, and are ruled by their own chiefs through native councils, the pattern of constitution most favoured throughout the Pacific. Their trade is principally in copra.

### *The Pitcairn Wanderers.*

**A Refuge for Mutineers.**—When the mutineers of H.M.S. *Bounty* fled with their Tahitian wives for a remote hiding-place, they fetched up at a small island on the extreme eastern fringe of the Polynesian archipelago, far from all steamship lanes of modern traffic. Pitcairn is situated at 25 deg. 3 min. S. latitude and 130 deg. 8 min. E. longitude, practically half-way between Australia and America. It has an area of about two square miles, and no harbour. Discovered by Carteret in 1767, it had no settlers until the *Bounty* refugees arrived there in 1780, and their presence was not discovered until 1808, so infrequent were the visitors.

Thereafter vessels of the Royal Navy visited at long intervals. In 1814, thirty-five years after the mutiny, Sir Thomas Staines, captain of H.M.S. *Briton*, assured the survivors that the time had passed when they were likely to be pursued by the hand of justice. So they continued to live on under their patriarchal form of government.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., Cd. 4356.

**Migration to Tahiti.**—In 1831 scarcity of water threatened the existence of the little colony, and by order of the British Government the whole of the people, numbering then eighty-three, were removed to the homes of their maternal forebears, Tahiti. They were received with great cordiality by Queen Pomare, but took unkindly to the new life, and before two years had passed they were all back in their old home.

The next proposal for migration came from the islanders themselves in 1853. They had been visited in the previous year by Admiral Moresby and the famous Baron de Thierry, and it was on their suggestion that they asked the Colonial Office to remove them to Norfolk Island.<sup>1</sup>

Until this time Pitcairn had not been formally recognised as a part of Her Majesty's dominions, though its people always prized the British connection. Through Admiral Moresby they sent a petition to the queen asking to be allowed to consider themselves her subjects and Pitcairn a British colony, as it had in fact become subject to the ratification of the act of the captain of H.M.S. *Fly* a few years earlier. Her Majesty replied that she was gratified by the mark of loyalty "from her subjects on Pitcairn's Island," and that no doubt really existed as to its being part of her dominions.

**Removal to Norfolk Island.**—The Colonial Office was quite favourable to the proposed migration, and took a most flattering view of the character of the islanders. In 1852 Pakington urged the speedy and complete evacuation of Norfolk to make room for the Pitcairners, "who in the small and remote island which they occupied had preserved an innocence of life and gentleness and benevolence of manners which had gained for them the esteem and admiration and the goodwill of all by whom they had been visited" (Pakington to Lieutenant-Governor Sir W. Denison).<sup>2</sup> Denison hastened to have the island cleared of its bad characters for the reception of the Pitcairners.

The simple islanders were very loth to change their abode, unless they received a guarantee of the complete cession of Norfolk,<sup>3</sup> to be held by them on the same terms on which they held Pitcairn. This, of course, was impossible,

<sup>1</sup> *Pitcairn*, by the Rev. T. B. Murray.      <sup>2</sup> P.P. 1854, No. 2160.

<sup>3</sup> Norfolk Island (29 deg. 2 min. S., 167 deg. 58 min. E.) has an area of 15 square miles. It was discovered by Cook in 1774, and in 1788 became a penal settlement for the worst type of offenders. Owing to the difficulty of maintaining communication with New South Wales, 900 miles distant, it was in 1809 evacuated. In 1825 it was again occupied for penal purposes.

but they were assured by Commodore Toup Nicolas that they would receive grants of allotments, and that at the moment it was not intended to allow "any other class of settlers to reside or occupy land on the island."

The solicitude of the Colonial Office for the welfare of the islanders was quite genuine, but Denison carried it to rather an extreme point. When it was suggested that one convict, a clever craftsman, should remain on the island for the benefit of the newcomers, who had lost most of the useful crafts of civilisation, he gave peremptory orders for his instant removal to Hobart Town, "as I cannot but consider the introduction of the convict element in the shape of an old unmarried sheep-stealer (for such I find was the crime for which he was transported) as most objectionable" (Denison to Labouchere). And this in spite of the petition of the islanders themselves, who had heard that the sheep-stealer was "an old man and, we think, a reformed man."

**An Uncontaminated People.**—Denison even opposed the design of Bishop Selwyn in 1856 to make Norfolk Island the headquarters of the Melanesian Mission. Grey had suggested to the Home Government that some buildings vacated by the convicts should be handed over to the Mission, but Denison's determination to protect the Pitcairners from all possible contact with other people was strictly adhered to.<sup>1</sup>

The administration of Norfolk had now to be provided for afresh. As a convict settlement it had been under the administration of Tasmania. Geographically it fell within the boundaries of New South Wales, and Denison, to continue his fatherly interest in the new settlers, suggested that it should be placed under his jurisdiction. In this the Colonial Office concurred, and Labouchere promised an Order-in-Council to effect this purpose without annexing Norfolk to New South Wales. The Order, which was dated 24th June 1856, separated Norfolk from Tasmania and erected it into a separate and distinct colony, the governor for the time being of New South Wales being also governor of Norfolk. Ecclesiastically it remained part of the diocese of Van Diemen's Land.<sup>2</sup>

**Back again to Pitcairn.**—The Pitcairners were moved to Norfolk in 1856, but once more they failed to take kindly to the new life. Some indeed settled down, and a band of young men purchased gear from an American whaler and started their own fisheries. But soon there were many of

<sup>1</sup> Tucker's *Life of Selwyn*.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1857, Sess. II., No. 2243.

the islanders wishing to get back to their rock far away to the east. Denison tried hard to persuade them to persevere for the sake of their children, who must profit from closer contact with civilisation than their fathers had enjoyed.

The yearning for the old scenes prevailed. In 1859 sixteen families returned to Pitcairn and three others were preparing to go. The Colonial Office grew naturally impatient, and ordered Denison to see that no further charges were incurred by the Imperial exchequer on behalf of the Pitcairners. A report by Captain Proby Doughty, R.N., in 1884, states that the islanders told him they just reached their rock again in time to prevent its occupation by the French, who had recently established their protectorate over almost the whole of the eastern Polynesian archipelago. The captain of a French ship of war which arrived the day following the landing appears to have told them this and to have been surprised to find the island occupied.<sup>1</sup>

**The Administration of Norfolk.**—When Lord Hampden was going out in 1895 as Governor of New South Wales he asked for advice as to the position of Norfolk. Under the Order-in-Council of 1856 the Governor of New South Wales had full legislative authority, but the old customs and usages of the Pitcairners had been preserved, with the result that commissioners appointed in 1894 found “no court of justice nor prison, no sheriff nor paid policemen: consequently no means for the recovery of debt nor for the punishment of serious crime.”<sup>2</sup> Complaints had been made to the chief magistrate of the island that the laws were not being enforced, few offenders being brought to trial, and sentences when pronounced being often evaded.

Chamberlain took the obvious course of suggesting that New South Wales should take over the administration, to which that colony willingly agreed. But no sooner had an announcement been made than the peculiar interests of New Zealand were pleaded as a bar to the transfer. The island, wrote the Agent-General, was an ecclesiastical province of New Zealand, and the bishops of Melanesia and of New Zealand demanded that if any change was made New Zealand should be given control, and in any case should be consulted as a matter of courtesy.

The Colonial Office was surprised that New Zealand considered she had any special claim to Norfolk, and the claim does not seem to have been very solidly based, for although

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1899, C. 9148.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1899, C. 8358.



New Zealand protested in March 1896 against Hampden's proclamation absorbing the island she took no further steps, and Chamberlain had to cable again asking what had become of the despatch.<sup>1</sup>

This produced a reply in which it was pointed out that Norfolk was likely to become a landing-place for the Pacific cable, and that New Zealand had the strongest possible objection to the point of bifurcation of this cable being controlled by any other colony than New Zealand. She desired no change at all, but if one was insisted on then New Zealand, being 300 miles nearer than New South Wales, should be the controlling authority. With characteristic brusqueness Chamberlain replied that the trade connections were with New South Wales, and that "unless you send by telegraph strong reasons for further delay" the transfer would be effected as a matter of urgency. New Zealand had nothing to add, and the Order-in-Council was issued on 15th January 1897.

New South Wales was not at all anxious to legislate for the new dependency. The elders and members of the House in Norfolk itself prayed that the old laws and customs should continue, but Hampden insisted that a magistrate should be appointed to see that the laws were carried out.

**The Eternal Problem.**—The problem of Pitcairn itself remained insoluble. Rear-Admiral H. B. Palliser reported in 1898 that the islanders were gravely deteriorating owing to intermarriage and overpopulation. They had left their old primitive ways and had developed vices. There was an absence of discipline and incentive to work and of moral fibre, and Palliser suggested that besides sending a present of animals for the material benefit of the Pitcairners they should have a governor appointed to control them. But above all any who wished to leave the island should be encouraged to do so, for even if they returned it would be with an endowment of new ideas which must inevitably be helpful.<sup>2</sup>

Chamberlain was not the sort of Colonial Secretary to allow things to drift. He at once placed the island under the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, and in October 1898 Mr Hamilton Hunter went down to proclaim the change and to hold a court. He fully bore out the views of Admiral Palliser. There seemed to be no future at all for the Pitcairners except hopeless imbecility, and he suggested removing them to Fiji, where by working

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1897, C. 8358.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1899, C. 9148.



a block of land they might eventually become useful settlers, "while the young people might go out to service and supply a much felt want in this colony." The executive council of Fiji approved the proposal, but the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, who was also Governor of Fiji, strongly dissented. The habits and intellectual attainments of the Pitcairners seemed to him to hold out little hope that they would be able to earn a living, and a considerable likelihood that they would become a charge on the finances of Fiji.

The Colonial Secretary thought the present state of Norfolk precluded any idea of sending them thither again, and he looked with most favour on Hunter's alternative of educating the islanders by enabling them to visit Tahiti. The Governor of Tahiti was anxious to help, but here again was some difficulty. Pitcairn produced nothing that was marketable in Tahiti, and there was consequently no shipping communication. Eventually the Seventh Day Adventists in Raiatea came to the help of any young men from Pitcairn who wished to emigrate by offering them employment on their plantations.<sup>1</sup>

The present population of Pitcairn is about 150.

Norfolk Island became the headquarters and seminary of the Melanesian Mission, which had its origin in the province of New Zealand. The population at the census of 1911 was 792 whites and 193 Melanesians, the latter being students and evangelists from the New Hebrides and the Solomon Islands.

**The Gateway of the Pacific.**—Although situated in the South Atlantic, it is impossible to consider the Falkland Islands except as a part of the Pacific system, at all events from the strategic point of view. Situated between 51 deg. and 53 deg. S. and between 57 deg. and 62 deg. W., about 480 miles north-east of Cape Horn, they are an outpost and port of refuge on the Cape Horn route to and from the Pacific, and could be utilised as a most effective base of operations in a military empire. That significance was not properly realised until the early days of the great war, when a British force watching the gateway from this point was able to destroy the German Pacific fleet.

It is important to note that no non-American power has any post in South America that could be so used. At the same time the opening of the Panama Canal has greatly diminished the importance of the Cape Horn route for any but South American shipping, and has diminished in the

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1901, Cd. 754.

same measure the strategic importance of the Falklands position.

**The Spanish Cession.**—The Falklands were discovered in 1593 by Richard Hawkins, and became British through cession by Spain in 1771. The possession was not asserted, and in 1820 the republic of Buenos Ayres occupied the group as derelict. In 1831, after a difference between the settlers and American whaling vessels, the United States ship of war *Lexington* broke up the settlement and removed the settlers to Buenos Ayres. Two years later Britain enforced her rights and occupied the islands for the protection of the whale fishery. For eleven years they were administered by the naval officers on the station, who made valuable surveys of the coasts. In 1843 a civil administration was formed with headquarters at Port Louis or Anson, but it was transferred in the following year to Port William or Stanley.

From 1841 to 1880 the colony received regular grants from the exchequer, and until 1885 subsidies for a mail connection. Since then it has been self-supporting. The governor rules with a legislative council, of which two members are nominated by royal warrant.

The area of the groups of Falkland and South Georgia (some hundreds of miles to the eastward) is 7500 square miles, and the population was estimated in December 1915 at 3451. South Georgia alone has an area of 1000 square miles and a population of 1003.

The revenue of the Falklands before the war increased from £15,476 in 1901 to £32,285 in 1913, and the expenditure from £17,639 in 1901 to £24,614 in 1913.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PACIFIC CABLE

**A Scientific Fallacy.**—By one of those inscrutable assumptions which science has permitted, it was supposed for many years that the great depth of the Pacific Ocean would preclude absolutely the laying of a submarine cable across it to connect Canada with the Australasian colonies. This belief was accepted implicitly at the Colonial Conference held in Sydney in June 1877 to consider the improvement of telegraphic communication between Australia and the rest of the world.

Four main projects were then discussed. Three of them proposed to lay cables by way of Asia, and the fourth by way of the United States. The practicability of the schemes was considered by the Agents-General in London, and the route from New Zealand to Honolulu and thence to San Francisco was condemned as absolutely impracticable owing to the depth of water. Two years later, in 1879, Mr (afterwards Sir) Sandford Fleming, chief engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway, discussing the early completion of the overland telegraph from the Atlantic to the Pacific, suggested that "as a matter of imperial importance the British possessions to the west of the Pacific Ocean should be connected by submarine cable with the Canadian line. Great Britain will thus be brought into direct communication with all the greater colonies and dependencies without passing through foreign countries" (Mr Fleming to the Superintendent of the Telegraph and Signal Service, Ottawa, 11th June 1879).

In his report the following year, Fleming developed his idea, insisting that a trans-Pacific cable to Asia should have its American end on Canadian soil. He asked personally to be granted the exclusive privilege of landing such a cable in Canada, and urged that as the most favourable route to India, Australia, and New Zealand was via Japan one of

the Kurile islands should be transferred to the British Crown. The last proposal was dropped, but by the end of the year Japan had agreed to the landing of the cable at any suitable point in the island of Yezo. It is to the credit of the Canadian Government and the House of Commons that they took a pioneering interest in Fleming's proposals and granted him the desired charter.

Fleming was not disposed to accept the existing knowledge of the physical conditions of the Pacific as conclusive or the deductions as sound. He asked that one of Her Majesty's ships stationed at Esquimalt should undertake a detailed survey of the proposed route.

**The Polynesian Route Proposed.**—Five years elapsed without any headway being made. In 1885 Fleming published a pamphlet in London in which he boldly declared for the direct route from Canada to Australia through Polynesia, a route which had hitherto been condemned as impossible.<sup>1</sup> He also suggested the payment of an annual joint subsidy of £100,000 by the governments of Great Britain, Canada, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand.

The proposal to lay a cable from Australia to the United States was discussed at some length in Australia, and Earl Stanhope took the hint and addressed a circular letter to the whole of the colonies, suggesting that the American terminus should be in Canada rather than in the United States. When the Colonial Conference met in London in 1887 Sir H. T. Holland was in the chair, and he expressed in a rather off-hand manner the Government's attitude to a proposal towards which it had shown nothing but impatience:—

"A very strong case would have to be made out," he said, "to justify Her Majesty's Government in proposing to Parliament to provide a subsidy for maintaining a cable in competition with a telegraphic system which, at any rate, supplies the actual needs of the Imperial Government."

Sir Julius Vogel, Colonial Treasurer of New Zealand, suggested a joint ownership of the cable by the colonies and the Mother Country, but the discussion did not reach as far as this. The conference merely agreed on a resolution from Canada, urging the British Government "to set at rest by

<sup>1</sup> For the history of the Pacific cable, see P.P., C. 7632, 9247, 9283, etc., and *The All Red Line*, ed. G. Johnson, Ottawa, 1903.

a thorough and exhaustive survey every doubt as to the practicability" of the Polynesian route.

The Admiralty would not agree to send a vessel specially for the purpose of taking soundings over the whole route, but promised to endeavour to arrange that soundings should be taken gradually during the next few years in the ordinary course of hydrographic surveying. This was in May 1887. The Secretary of State excused the delay by the observation that there was no prospect of sufficient funds being found for the maintenance of such a cable (Colonial Office to Governor-General, Canada, 1st September 1887).

In a later despatch the Colonial Secretary said he could hold out no hope of the scheme being favourably received, and that the colonies themselves would have to provide the money for cost and maintenance. Nothing at all was done in regard to the survey, and when the Intercolonial Postal Conference met at Sydney in March 1888, it could only pass similar resolutions afresh and offer to pay the cost of the survey.

**The Survey Untouched.**—The position was just the same when the Intercolonial Conference met at Ottawa in 1894, seven years after the conference in London. Nothing at all had been done on the survey, and again resolutions were passed praying the British Government to move its departments to assist. To show that they were in earnest, the colonies decided to call for commercial offers for laying the cable. As a result it was found that several firms were willing to survey the route and lay the cable at less than the estimated cost.

Once again it was the galvanic personality of Chamberlain that infused life into a drooping empire cause. In November 1895 the new Colonial Secretary decided that no further time should be lost, and on his suggestion there was a meeting of the Agents-General in London a week later. They unanimously recommended the setting up of an expert commission to report on the project, and a few months later this was done by Chamberlain himself.

When the report of the Imperial Pacific Cable Committee was signed on 5th January 1897, the Pacific cable was almost an accomplished fact as far as the main obstacle—official indifference—was concerned. Its practicability was endorsed. State ownership was emphatically recommended. The route proposed was from Vancouver via Fanning Island, Fiji, and Norfolk Island to New Zealand and Queensland. The interest of Chamberlain was a driving force in striking



contrast to the obstinate and defiant indifference of the Colonial Office throughout the previous fifteen years.

"In any matter in which the colonies themselves are deeply interested," he said in opening the Colonial Conference of 1897, "they may count on the support and assistance of the Mother Country. . . . I think that one of the very first things to bind together the sister nations is to have the readiest and the easiest possible communication between the several units."

That conference itself did not advance the question, but before they next met it was accomplished, in spite of influences which kept the Committee's report back from the public for two years.

**Construction of the Cable.**—In 1899 H.M.S. *Egeria* surveyed the line from Vancouver to within 300 miles of Fanning Island. On 31st December 1900 the contract was signed for the construction of the cable. Towards the end of 1902 the cable was completed. A few months later the American cable from California to Hawaii was opened.

During the protracted discussion over the project, extending over a quarter of a century, the prospects of various islands being used as landing stations were mooted, and the British Government did take steps from time to time to secure such as it thought desirable. In 1893, when Sir Mackenzie Bowell, Canadian Minister of Trade and Commerce, visited Australia in connection with the scheme, he was much impressed by the situation of Necker Island (latitude 23 deg. 35 min. N., longitude 164 deg. 39 min. W.) as a midway station. Lying 240 miles to the westward of Hawaii, it was then derelict and uninhabited, and Fleming had strongly recommended it as being on the most direct route from Vancouver to the coast of Queensland.

**An Acquisitive Project.**—Necker was discovered by La Perouse in 1786, and was considered by him too insignificant to take possession of. While in Hawaii Mr Bowell made a memorandum strongly recommending that steps be taken to bring it under the British flag. Hawaii itself was in the throes of a revolution and on the threshold of annexation, and Lord Ripon, then Colonial Secretary, held this to be a reason for delaying action "pending the establishment of the Government of Hawaii upon a more permanent footing." When the new Government came into power it was composed almost entirely of Americans or persons of American sympathies. Month after month passed without any action being taken.

In May 1894 Lord Rosebery, who had come into office as Foreign Secretary, assured Canada that the British representatives at Honolulu would "watch the matter closely," but he too thought that no action should be taken in view of the disturbed condition of Hawaii. Fleming, though, was less patient. He was intensely anxious to ensure that the British flag and no other should float over Neckar, and that it should be there as an accomplished fact when the conference met at Ottawa. And to forestall disappointment, he decided in his private capacity to arrange for the occupation of the island by a British subject, and the hoisting of the British flag. Sir Charles Tupper duly communicated the project to the Colonial Office. The result was a complete damper. "Rosebery much annoyed at action," he cabled to Fleming on 31st May. "Will repudiate. Fears will destroy good prospect of obtaining Neckar. Prevent action becoming public, if possible."

**A Scheme Miscarries.**—But the project was defeated from London. When the naval officer whom Fleming had entrusted with this duty reached Honolulu, he learned that the British Government had already acknowledged the sovereignty of Hawaii over the island—although nobody of either nation had landed there—and had asked the provisional government of Hawaii on what terms they would transfer control to Britain for the purpose of the cable station. Under the circumstances the officer had no option but to abandon his mission, and the Hawaiian Government forthwith chartered the steamer for which he had been negotiating and made good its shadowy claim by hoisting its flag.

Neckar Island still seemed so suitable for a landing-place that a Canadian Commission went to Hawaii to negotiate an agreement to use it for this purpose. They carried out their task quite satisfactorily, but the project was killed by the decision of the United States Senate that such a lease as was contemplated would be an infringement of the Reciprocity Treaty with Hawaii.

**Other Islands Annexed.**—In view of the cable being laid, Great Britain in 1888 hoisted her flag on a number of small islands which seemed likely to be of use for landings. These included: Fanning, 3 deg. 51 min. N., 159 deg. 22 min. W.; Penrhyn, 9 deg. S., 158 deg. 3 min. W.; Christmas, 1 deg. 57 min. N., 157 deg. 27 min. W.; Suvarrow, 13 deg. 13 min. S., 163 deg. 9 min. W.

When the Neckar idea fell through Fanning was decided

on as a landing station. The cable runs, therefore, from Bamfield (Vancouver) to Fanning Island, thence to Fiji and Norfolk, at which point it bifurcates to New Zealand and Australia. Suwarrow and Penrhyn are now included in the extended boundaries of New Zealand.

Fanning was most favourably reported upon by the British consul at Hawaii as long ago as 1857. Besides large quantities of cocoa-nuts it produced abundance of bananas, arrowroot, firewood, and fresh water. Moreover, in its oblong contour 10 miles in length was a deep lagoon "capable of holding the whole of the British Navy," and abounding in a variety of fine fish.<sup>1</sup> The Pacific cable was cut at Fanning by a German squadron during the great war, but was shortly reunited.

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1857-8, lv. p. 156.

## CHAPTER XVII

### BRITISH DOMINIONS AND THE FAR EAST

**The Nineteenth Century Expectation.**—The relations of the British dominions in the Pacific with China and Japan are one of those questions which have caused some anxiety in the past, and must inevitably be of greater moment in the future. Hitherto their treatment has been comparatively simple, partly because of their great distance apart; partly because neither of the Asiatic powers has yet taken an official interest in colonisation; and partly because the foreign policy of both is more for the future than it has been in the past.

The idea of a great trade connection between Australia and the Far East—India and China—is historic. Officials in the early part of the nineteenth century, when this region of the world was largely the affair of the Honourable East India Company, noted that the ships going out to Australia with convicts and supplies generally proceeded thence to China and to India for homeward cargoes. The dangers of navigating the wide uncharted archipelagos of the Spice Islands were a source of constant apprehension. Yet the idea of a more and more important trade persisted, and many naval scientists and surveyors devoted themselves to examining the channels and reefs of these islands with the enthusiasm due to a great task.

**Torres Straits Settlements.**—Captain P. P. King, R.N., discovered in 1818 the haven of Port Essington, in the extreme north of what is now the Northern Territory of Australia, and he at once designated it as a spot which, by reason of its good harbour and its proximity to the Moluccas and New Guinea, on the direct line of communication between Sydney and India, and commanding the passage of the straits, must become “a place of great trade and of very considerable importance.”

The first settlement at Port Essington was established

in 1824. It was a complete failure, and was finally evacuated in 1829, another settlement having been planted at Raffles Bay in 1827. These projects were all favoured by the Home Government as likely to foster the Eastern trade; but they were killed by the lack of communication with the eastern colonies of Australia, the unhealthy climate, and the hostility of the natives. The hope of opening a trade with the East Indies by introducing European goods in the islands seemed quite doomed by the end of 1827, because the vessels passing the straits were on through voyages. This settlement too failed. But the Government persevered, for, after all, there was urgent need for a port of refuge in these waters.<sup>1</sup>

The Essington scheme was again brought forward in the early days of Queen Victoria. The clearances from Port Jackson for India, Java, and the East Indies by way of Torres Straits grew from 4700 tons in 1832 to 14,950 tons in 1838. That quaint body of theorists on which the Colonial Office relied so much in its early Victorian troubles, the Colonial Land and Emigration Board, sat in judgment in 1840 on the Port Essington scheme, which it fully approved. The trade, it said, was likely to grow. Not only was there need of a port of call and refuge in that particular region, but "a trading post disposing of British manufactured goods to the Malays, and receiving in return various products of the East," seemed likely to succeed. But apart from all this, "upon grounds of general expediency and independently of the peculiar facilities this situation may possess as a naval station or as a commercial depot, it appears in the highest degree desirable that the northern coast of New Holland should be made British territory by actual occupation." Indeed the Board recommended this policy even at some cost to the country.<sup>2</sup>

In 1837 the station was established, and garrisoned by detachments sent from England. But at the end of eleven years it was still unable to keep itself in fresh vegetables, and Captain Owen Stanley declared the site quite insalubrious. In 1849 it was finally abandoned.

**The Establishment at Somerset.**—The matter of a station for naval and refuge purposes near Cape York was again brought forward by the Governor of Queensland (Sir G. F. Bowen) in 1860.<sup>3</sup> He proposed this spot as more directly commanding the strait, and more healthy than

<sup>1</sup> *The History of Australian Exploration*, by Ernest Favenc.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1840, xlvii.

<sup>3</sup> P.P. 1861, No. 2890.



the previous sites. His visit to Cape York in 1862 led directly to the formation of the coaling station, which was called Somerset. An additional argument which helped to decide the question was the establishment of the French colony and naval station at New Caledonia. By commanding the whole of the commerce between the Pacific and the Indian oceans by this route, Somerset seemed a valuable counterstep to Noumea (Bowen to Colonial Office, 9th December 1861).

Queensland offered to form and manage the settlement and to support the civil establishment, but carefully repudiated any direct interest in the naval station, inasmuch as it was farther from Brisbane than Gibraltar was from London. The naval authorities selected a position close by for an arsenal and coal depot.

**Thursday Island.**—In 1881 Major-General Sir P. Scratchley, in his report on the defence of Australia, advised the fortification of Thursday Island, from which the navigable channels of Torres Strait could be most efficiently commanded. That post has since been continuously held and developed as part of the general policy of Australian defence, and also for administrative and police purposes. Its importance can scarcely be exaggerated.

The pearl fisheries and bêche-de-mer industries both employ a considerable number of alien divers and other workmen, for whom it was absolutely necessary to provide a jurisdiction. It was for this purpose, and to prevent the lodgment of islanders and others "for questionable purposes," that the boundaries of Queensland were extended in 1878 to include the islands in the Straits. At the same time, for the purpose of coping with the kanaka traffic, the High Commissioner appointed the magistrate at Thursday to be his deputy.<sup>1</sup>

**The Rights of Chinese.**—So much for the early trade relations of the colonies and the East. Keith<sup>2</sup> shows that as regards Chinese immigration, the Chinese people have no treaty rights either by the Treaty of Nanking or by that of Peking, to enter upon British territory in any part of the world. These treaties were made with a power having little international status, and while they conferred rights and privileges on Englishmen in China they were not reciprocal. This is rather interesting in view of the treaties of amity and

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1883, C. 3617.

<sup>2</sup> *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, by Dr A. Berriedale Keith.

reciprocity which had ere this been concluded with such quasi-civilised states as Hawaii.

The cession of Hongkong under the Treaty of Nanking was not demanded by England with any view to colonisation, but "for diplomatic, commercial, and military purposes" (Derby to Governor Sir Henry Pottinger, 3rd June 1843). This definition of its purposes was elaborated by Labouchere in 1856, when he said that Hongkong was held "not because of any natural advantages which it possesses, but simply as subsidiary to the intercourse between the British and Chinese empires." Like Port Hamilton, which was held for a short time as a precaution against Russian activity in the North Pacific, it had no outlook on the Pacific at all. It had no Pacific trade beyond the Philippines, which are Asiatic, and no Pacific communications.

**Origin of the Yellow Peril.**—Long traffic with China ports by European nations had, by the middle of the nineteenth century, set up a natural leakage of individual Chinese into almost all of the countries bordering on the Pacific. Everywhere the unsurpassed industrial qualities of the Chinese conquered for them a livelihood and often a competence. Employers appreciated their patience, their sobriety, their docility, and their capacity; and on the whole they were made welcome. But herein lay the elements of an economic problem to which no European government could close its eyes for long.

The influx into Australia became marked on the discovery of gold in 1851. It was Victoria's gold, and Victoria took early alarm at the inrush. From 2000 in 1854 the number of Chinese in the colony had increased to 42,000 in 1859. In 1855 a law was passed limiting the admission of Chinese passengers to one for every ten tons burthen of the vessel carrying them. A poll-tax was also imposed. In 1863 the number of Chinese had decreased to 20,000, but it is not to be supposed that these restrictions were the only cause. The laws were then repealed. New South Wales and South Australia also legislated and repealed. For a while the scare died away so completely that the Imperial Government disallowed a Queensland Act of 1876, and drove the colony to the expedient of a poll-tax and a delay on mining rights.

British Columbia was by this time feeling a wave of Chinese immigration, which it endeavoured to check by a series of acts between 1878 and 1884. Most of the more important were vetoed as clashing with Dominion rights or Imperial interests, and all that was left to the province in

the end was some prohibitions against the holding of Crown lands and other minor imposts.<sup>1</sup> Incidentally a royal commission in 1884 disproved most of the allegations against the character and morality of the Chinese, and found that a majority of the white population of the province did not wish them to be expelled. Nevertheless it proposed a moderate restrictive power for the future. In the long run the Dominion Parliament came to the rescue, and in 1885 enacted both a poll-tax and a tonnage rule as in Australia.

The United States in 1880 concluded a treaty with China to limit or suspend the immigration of Chinese "labourers."

**China makes a Protest.**—There was meanwhile a recrudescence of the influx into Australia, and in 1881 Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales, and New Zealand all passed restrictive measures embodying in various degrees of severity the poll-tax and the tonnage rules. Queensland, Western Australia, and Tasmania also took action, so that by the end of 1887 Chinese were denied free access to any part of Australia. Moreover, by discriminating under the factory laws in that year, Victoria took the initiative in a programme of social conservation, which later became the guiding principle of legislation throughout Australia and New Zealand. Feeling was unquestionably strong on the subject, and the Imperial Government fortunately recognised the fact at an early stage.

In December 1887 China took up officially in London the question of the treatment of Chinese nationals in British dominions. Basing its complaints on the fact that Crown colonies, administered direct from Downing Street, did not discriminate against Chinese immigration, it demanded that the same freedom of movement should be given in self-governing colonies, and relied on the Acts of 1842 and 1860 as securing that right.

The Colonial Office submitted the matter to all the colonies, and the replies are instructive as giving the original arguments against the influx. New South Wales held her cause of contention to be so much a "national concern as to be taken up by the Empire. If we have no voice in making treaties, it seems only just that our interests should be considered by those who exercise that power. The most prevailing determination in all the Australian communities is to preserve the British type in the population. There can be no interchange of ideas, of

<sup>1</sup> For a summary of these laws, see Keith's *Responsible Government*.

religion, or citizenship, nor can there be intermarriage or social communion, between the British and the Chinese."

Sir Samuel Griffith (Queensland) said experience had shown that the Chinese became formidable competitors with English labour in almost every branch of industry, and he continued: "As, owing to their habits of life, the cost of subsistence is to them very much less than to Europeans living in accordance with European habits, the effect of their unrestricted competition would undoubtedly be to materially lower wages and reduce the standard of comfort of the European artisan and labourer."<sup>1</sup>

**The British Government Sympathetic.**—Thousands of speeches delivered in all parts of the world since then have not expressed more clearly than these extracts the case for a White Australia. At the very moment of the discussion an exceptional influx into the unoccupied Northern Territory (through Port Darwin) was reported, and the alarm was heightened by the arrival in Sydney and Melbourne of several ships carrying Chinese immigrants in excess of the statutory quota. With the vessels in their harbour the New South Wales Parliament passed a law of severe restriction, and refused to allow the Chinese to land.

Lord Carrington (now the Marquess of Lincolnshire), who was Governor of New South Wales at the time, took the matter up very warmly, and assured the Secretary of State that it was the universal belief in Australia that "if these colonies are to be an offshoot of Britain they must be kept clear of Chinese immigration. I am positive," he added, "that this is not a cry got up for political purposes. It is a deeply founded feeling and belief of the vast majority of the colonists."

The British Government was fully sensible of the strength of feeling, and in the midst of the negotiations with China gave its assent to restrictive measures passed in New South Wales and New Zealand. South Australia proposed that a colonial conference should be held to arrive at a general scheme to lay before the Colonial Office. Knutsford treated the matter very tactfully. He cordially approved the conference as an Australian matter pure and simple, and did not desire that the Imperial Government should be represented—a mark of confidence which was much appreciated at the antipodes.

**The Sydney Conference.**—The Conference met at Sydney in June 1888. None of the colonies felt that they could safely leave the matter without further legislation of

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5448.



their own pending the result of the negotiations with China. They recommended that the Imperial Government should endeavour to get a treaty with China, under which Chinese should be entirely excluded, with the exception of officials, travellers, merchants, and students; and in the meantime they agreed to standardise their own legislation by leaving out the poll-tax, and making the passenger limitation one to every 500 tons of the ship's register.

The utmost cordiality was shown towards the Colonial Office—a striking contrast to the unhappy conditions of the Convention of 1883. On the part of the Imperial Government the matter was put through with admirable despatch and goodwill. The letter of the Chinese Minister which led to the discussion was dated 12th December 1887. Within six months the colonies had held their conference, and the Secretary of State had instructed the Minister at Peking to open negotiations in accordance with the resolutions.<sup>1</sup>

**Further Colonial Precautions.**—Nevertheless the influx of Chinese continued to be governed by colonial legislation, under the advice of the Colonial Secretary. Nor did the Imperial Government withhold assent from colonial bills. New Zealand imposed a language test; and the number of Chinese in New Zealand is constantly diminishing, though not necessarily for this reason. The Imperial Government declined to interfere when a Chinese petition was received in 1908, holding that the matter was exclusively for the Dominion to decide. Canada also, following the report of a royal commission, raised the poll-tax in 1903; and again a Chinese petition was overruled. The Commonwealth of Australia, by its Act of 1901, relies chiefly on a language test. At the census of 1901 the number of Chinese in Australia was only .79 per cent. of the population, and in New Zealand .28 per cent.

**Relations with Japan.**—The case of Japan has been entirely different from that of China. Whereas China remained deep in mediaevalism, sending out a generous stream of emigrant labourers, Japan at one bound, long before her economic condition induced the emigration of her surplus population, stepped from an archaic civilisation to almost the front rank of the great powers. It was not possible long to maintain against the subjects of such a power restrictions and disabilities which could properly be enacted against the Chinese.

The civilised powers first sought relations with Japan

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5448.



in 1854, when an American expedition under Commodore Parry took the initiative in concluding a commercial treaty. The Crimean War was in full swing, and the naval operations of the Allies against the Russian forces in the Pacific took Rear-Admiral Sir James Stirling in the autumn of the year to Japanese waters. The Anglo-French naval forces had bombarded Petropaulovsk, and then Stirling put into Nagasaki in search of the Russian fleet, which had spent a great part of the previous season there. Even if he should not find them, he hoped "to make such arrangements as should prevent them from making use of the ports and resources of Japan for refitting their ships and harbouring their prizes."

**The Anglo-Japanese Treaty, 1854.**—After prolonged negotiations, which he had to hasten by somewhat threatening language, Stirling completed his task on 14th October.

The treaty opened Nagasaki and Hakodate as ports of refuge to British ships, all other ports remaining closed except in cases of distress. In other respects English ships and subjects were secured equal rights with those of the most favoured nation, "always excepting the advantages accruing to the Dutch and Chinese from their existing relations with Japan."<sup>1</sup> The main object of the treaty, Stirling said, was to promote friendly intercourse, and he believed that it "afforded a means of cultivating a friendly understanding with the government and people of an extensive empire, whose neutrality in war and friendship at all times are matters of vital importance to British interests in the adjacent seas" (Stirling to Admiralty, 26th October 1854).<sup>2</sup>

British relations were improved by the mission of Lord Elgin in 1858. He took a steamer as a present to the emperor, and concluded a treaty of friendship and commerce providing for the appointment of British diplomatic agents and consuls in Japan, where hitherto only Holland and the United States were so represented.<sup>3</sup>

**Japan a Great Power.**—The modernisation of Japan proceeded with remarkable rapidity. Her claim to admission to the family of nations was based upon the establishment of constitutional government in 1875. In 1884 the whole country was thrown open to foreign trade. The constitution was liberalised in 1889, the first parliamentary elections being held the following year.

How great an advance the people had made in national consciousness was shown by their anxiety for more equal treatment in the approaching revision of their commercial

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1856, No. 2014.    <sup>2</sup> P.P. 1856, No. 2077.    <sup>3</sup> P.P. 1860, No. 2589.

treaties. In 1891 Japan asked for an earlier recovery of her fiscal autonomy than she was entitled to under the British treaty, which came up for revision in 1894. One by one her commercial conventions were revised in her favour. Great Britain was more reluctant than most of the powers to concede her terms, but after the defeat of China in 1895 it was impossible to withhold any longer the privileges of a first-class power. The treaty then made abolished the consular jurisdiction which had been designed as a necessary safeguard for Englishmen living in the Far East.

**The Anglo-Japanese Alliance.**—The close co-operation of the troops of England and Japan in the Boxer rising in China led directly to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. "We have both desired," wrote Lansdowne to Sir Claude Macdonald (30th January 1902), "that the integrity of the Chinese Empire should be preserved; that there should be no disturbance of the *status quo* either in China or in the adjoining regions; that all nations should be afforded equal opportunities." The military basis of the agreement was that if either party became involved in a war the other should maintain a strict neutrality, but in the event of either being confronted by the opposition of more than one hostile power the other should come to its assistance. The alliance bore early fruit in securing Japan freedom from attack by a third party in her war with Russia.

**The Asiatic Menace.**—In 1896 a conference of Australasian premiers at Sydney decided to apply the anti-Chinese restrictions to other Asiatics. New South Wales, New Zealand, South Australia, and Tasmania all presented bills for this purpose, but they were all reserved pending the meeting of the Imperial Conference in 1897.

In welcoming the delegates, Chamberlain spoke very seriously and sympathetically on the Asiatic problem. The British Empire, he said, contained an empire of 300,000,000 Asiatics, all as loyal to the Crown as the delegates themselves, and including many hundreds of thousands every whit as civilised as the white races.

"You cannot be willing," he continued, "to put upon those men a slight, which I think is absolutely unnecessary for your purpose, and which would be calculated to provoke ill-feeling, discontent, and irritation, and would be most unpalatable to the feelings not only of Her Majesty but of all her people."

He advised the conference to confine its attention to the character of the immigrants and not to their colour. The Natal

Act, No. 1 of 1897, seemed to him to approach a satisfactory solution by applying the test of writing a passage in a European language, as well as excluding unconditionally paupers, imbeciles, criminals, prostitutes, and diseased persons.

No decision was come to at the conference, but Chamberlain persevered, and later in the year was able to inform the Australian colonies that Japan also would accept the exclusion of her people by means of the language test.<sup>1</sup> With this powerful recommendation, the suggestion was accepted, and within the next few years Western Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania, and New Zealand put it into practice. After the federation the Commonwealth in its Act of 1901 adopted the language test for all Asiatics, and with some modifications it remains in force. The mere existence of the test has proved a powerful deterrent, and Australia has been able to make a further generous advance to India and Japan by allowing free admission to merchants, students, and people of kindred classes not wishing to become permanent residents.<sup>2</sup>

Queensland had adhered to the Japanese Treaty of 1894 conditionally on being enabled to restrict the immigration of Japanese labourers. This protocol became binding on the Commonwealth Government and Parliament after the federation, but it was formally denounced in 1908.<sup>3</sup>

**Australia and Asiatic Seamen.**—That the language test did not, however, completely settle the Asiatic problem was evident when the Commonwealth proceeded in its earliest days to put into effect the "White Australia" policy to which it was committed from its birth. By the Post and Telegraph Act of 1901 the Federal Parliament forbade the making of any contract for the carriage of ocean mails with shipping companies who employed other than white labour. This was aimed directly at British lines which had for years employed seamen belonging to India (lascars).

Chamberlain at once declared that this Act must terminate any mail agreement between the Imperial and the Australian governments. By the Mutiny Act of 1858 the Crown had bound itself to the natives of India in the same relationship of duty as to the other peoples of the Empire, and the British Government could not consistently become a party to a contract in which the employment of Indian subjects was in terms forbidden "on the ground of colour only." The case of Australia, he held, was all the weaker for the fact that it

<sup>1</sup> P.P. Aust. 1901, No. 41.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. Aust. 1905, No. 61.

<sup>3</sup> Keith, *Responsible Government in the Dominions*, p. 1084.

was seeking not to protect its white population from an influx of foreign immigrants, but merely to prevent "the employment of His Majesty's Indian subjects on a contract to be mainly performed in tropical or subtropical waters."

"His Majesty's Government deeply regret," he added, "that in regard to a matter which cannot affect the conditions of employment in Australia, and in no way affects that purity of race which the people of Australia justly value, the (Parliament of the Commonwealth) should have considered it desirable to dissociate themselves so completely from the obligations and policy of the Empire."<sup>1</sup>

The Commonwealth took yet another step in the same direction in 1906 by passing a Bill to restrict the tariff preference to British goods to such as were carried in ships manned exclusively by white labour. As the Bill infringed several commercial treaties it was not assented to, so that the white labour aspect did not require to be adjudicated upon.

A New Zealand Bill of 1910 to penalise vessels employing lascars was also refused the royal assent, after being discussed at the Imperial Conference of 1911.

**Wise Influence of the Colonial Office.**—So far the restriction of Asiatics has been fairly satisfactory considering the geographical and economic influences bearing on the problem. It cannot be said to have reached a solution though, for a recent royal commission in Australia recommended the gradual exclusion of Japanese divers from the pearl fisheries in favour of white labour.

For a few years the language test seemed to give wide satisfaction, but gradually even in this connection new difficulties arose. When Canada desired to take advantage of the commercial treaty with Japan, Japanese immigrants were *ipso facto* guaranteed free access to the Dominion, and a serious overflow from Hawaii was at once directed to British Columbia. Popular riots followed as a protest, and the Canadian Government sought an understanding by direct negotiation with Japan. A satisfactory agreement was arrived at, under which the immigration was limited to a certain number of persons each year.

The Asiatic problem must inevitably be a serious one for Australia and New Zealand at all times. Up to the present, considering the strong public feeling on the matter, its treatment has had happy results. This is largely owing to the sagacious attitude adopted by the British Government. By taking the Dominions into its confidence and freely

<sup>1</sup> P.P., Cd. 1639.



acknowledging the justice of their fears, the Imperial Government has been able to control and co-ordinate the colonial restrictions, and at the same time to conciliate the Asiatic power concerned, with almost remarkable success.

**An Influence on History.**—The later history of both Australia and New Zealand has been influenced very seriously by the "Yellow Peril" in its twin aspects—the unconquerable industrial virtues of the Chinese and the power and prestige of Japan. By her possession of a strong constitutional government, Japan was enabled to take an honourable and responsible place amongst the great powers, and to be the faithful ally that she has been of Great Britain. That demonstration alone has done much to mitigate the apprehensions of the Dominions. China, on the other hand, is still on the threshold of a modern revolution. Her government is not organised on modern lines, and she is not even yet capable of making responsible treaties and exercising an influence in world politics commensurate with her economic importance.

The Imperial Government wisely acknowledged at the outset the reality of the menace offered to Australia and New Zealand by the overflow of capable and industrious artisans, labourers, and mechanics from China, and has lent the Dominions its loyal aid in endeavouring to bring the menace within bounds. It is a matter of conjecture how long the restrictions against the Chinese, notably the poll-tax, would have been maintained but for the influence of Japan.

Japan's internal development gave opportunities for its growing population to prosper at home, so that their emigration never attained the proportions of the Chinese stream. Moreover, Western education was widely diffused amongst the Japanese early in the present century, and the educated Oriental presented quite a separate problem.

It must not be forgotten that the military and naval preparations, which enabled the dominions of Australia and New Zealand to take such an honourable part in the great war as the ally of Japan, were instigated in the first instance by fear of the expansion of the Japanese themselves, and the Chinese. The pendulum of world politics has swung considerably since then; but the overthrow of the German menace cannot have a greater or a happier result in the future than the consequent readjustment of economic opportunity by which Japan and China alike are promised a full and sufficient future in Asia, without the necessity of a strong colonial policy in the Pacific.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE LABOUR PROBLEM

**Does the Pacific need China?**—While the white dominions of the Pacific have been so jealously and rightly guarding themselves against the social consequences of a great Chinese influx, the future development of the Pacific as a whole suggests the possibility that before long an appeal may have to be made to China to supply the labour which is apparently not forthcoming from native sources.

The smallness of the islands, their isolation and remoteness, have only served to emphasise the difficulties of providing labour for the plantations and other industries in which the white settlers have engaged. The economic organisation of those which are in British possession seems to depend to-day very largely on the use which can be made of the available supply of native labour. Up to the present the natives have not taken a very important part in the development of their islands. They have in too many cases yielded service only under conditions approaching those of "forced labour," even if in the British islands they have been far enough removed from actual slavery. In more than one important group numerous populations have existed in enervating indolence side by side with an imported race of labourers, and have steadily died off. This has happened in Hawaii and New Caledonia, and is happening to-day in Fiji. Will it also happen in Papua?

The Interstate Commission of Australia on the Trade of the Islands (1918) estimates that in the British, French, and what were formerly German possessions 200,000 acres of cocoa-nut plantations employ 40,000 natives, a number which is only 2.64 per cent. of the total native population, or 8 per cent. of the adult males. The wealthy sugar plantations of Fiji are quite dependent on the labour of 50,000 Indian coolies, who have flocked thither in the last thirty years and settled there as a new race. Elsewhere there are

4000 Chinese. In the American territory of Hawaii the once powerful Polynesian race is dying out. The work is done by thousands of Japanese, Chinese, and Portuguese labourers. Samoa, too, is largely worked by kanakas from outside the group.

**The Kanaka Population.**—It is shown by the Commission already quoted that of an estimated native population in all the Pacific Islands of 1,514,000, more than half were living in the erstwhile German possessions, as the following table shows :—

<i>British</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>French</i>
Papua . . . 250,000	New Guinea . 531,000	New Caledonia 28,000
Solomons . . 150,000	Bismarck . . 188,000	Tahiti, etc. . . 26,000
Fiji . . . . 92,000	Carolines, etc. 55,000	
Gilbert and	Samoa . . . 35,000	<u>54,000</u>
Ellice . . . 30,000	Marshall . . 15,000	
Tonga . . . 23,000	<u>824,000</u>	<i>French and British</i>
Cook . . . 12,000		<i>Condominium</i>
	<i>United States</i>	
<u>557,000</u>	Samoa . . . <u>9,000</u>	New Hebrides <u>70,000</u>

In spite of the wealth of kanaka labour in their own possessions, the Germans were permitted by treaty to recruit in the British Solomons, while British planters were specifically debarred from obtaining labour either in German or French possessions, or in New Guinea.

**The Wrong Civilisation.**—In the British possessions themselves, notably Fiji and New Guinea, the secured title to their land has tended to place the native inhabitants beyond the need of work and to make them idle. The Interstate Commission remarks that “the type of civilisation meted out to the native of the Pacific has been largely of a character not only altogether unsuitable for, but in many respects fatal to, his well-being,” and that the conversion of the native into a worker is a problem inseparably associated with the development of island industry. It is suggested that where measures taken by the Government have resulted in the creation of native landlords steps should be taken to correct the mistake.

In Fiji, after more than forty years of British government, only about one-seventh of the land has been alienated, and only one-ninth under Crown grant. In Papua, which has been a protectorate or a possession for thirty-three years, not one-half per cent. of the whole area is held in fee simple, and the natives have still a valid title to 98 per cent. In the

Solomons less than 2 per cent. has been disposed of to whites. There has been no alienation at all in fee simple in Gilbert and Ellice, or in Tonga. According to official statements<sup>1</sup> the individualisation of titles in Fiji, the absence of which has caused great trouble in the past, is still proceeding, and the Fijians show no anxiety to hand over suitable lands for development by white or Hindu enterprise.

The Commission found the principle of leasehold firmly established in the British Pacific possessions and in Papua. It is certainly a well-favoured principle in the British dominions, but the Commission advises a liberal and well-directed policy to encourage settlement of the islands by security of tenure.

**Principles of Native Development.**—Tribal ownership of land in New Zealand had very much the same baneful effect in the early days of the colony by making the native independent of his own labour. Under the communal system of ownership the profits of the industrious individual benefited himself only in a small measure as a member of the society. There was no incentive to individuals to work. Herein the well-wishers of the Maori saw yet another menace to their survival, and native legislation by the New Zealand Parliament proceeds on the assumption that the separation of individual titles, if it can be achieved, tends to encourage individual enterprise, and that it is in the interest of the race to develop their land as working agriculturists.

The native legislation of New Zealand, side by side with the honourable observance of the Treaty of Waitangi, has been conspicuously successful. It has only been developing for a few decades, but one result, so far as results can be said to follow from definite causes, is that the Maori people have ceased to decline in numbers. The Interstate Commission suggests that if the other branches of the Polynesian race are to be saved from extinction, it will be by the same method of teaching them to become workers once more.

**The Hindu Immigrant.**—Of all the labour imported from outside, the Hindu coolies of Fiji seem to have given the most satisfaction. At the end of 1914 there were 15,602 under indenture, of whom 9644 were male adults. And there were 37,754 time-expired immigrants remaining as permanent settlers in the group.<sup>2</sup> The Australian Commission says: "An undoubted preference was shown for Indian coolie labour, not so much for his superior efficiency as for the fact that he represented a more desirable class and

<sup>1</sup> Colonial Reports, No. 811.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 848.

constituted a better type of settler. This is no doubt due to racial distinctions and habits of life." The Hindu, being generally a townsman, has a tendency to congregate in large centres, whereas the Chinaman is willing to live by himself wherever his work takes him. Economically the Hindus are a powerful factor in Fiji. Not only have they made the sugar industry sound and flourishing, but by leasing or buying native lands they are pushing the native Fijian back and changing the face of the country.<sup>1</sup>

The racial complications produced in Hawaii and Fiji by a large and sometimes motley influx of coolies of other nations are not pleasant to contemplate. The happiest outcome of that governmental benevolence which the British have always practised towards subject races is to be looked for in the perpetuation of the natives themselves. And this is a result to which there is abundant reason to look forward hopefully in the light of our unexampled experience in such matters. The industrialising of the Polynesian and the Melanesian, even with some measure of compulsion, is essential in their own interest.

<sup>1</sup> P.P. Aust. 1918, No. 66 : F. 13489.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE NEW HEBRIDES

**France in the Western Pacific.**—The rivalries of the French and British in the Western Pacific since the middle of the nineteenth century have centred chiefly in the New Hebrides. Though not greater in aggregate area than the county of Yorkshire, they are very fertile and possess many fine harbours and a numerous population, and are consequently capable of great economic development as well as of being used for naval and military purposes.

First discovered by Quiros in 1606, and afterwards visited by Bougainville, the New Hebrides were so named by Cook in 1774 and carefully mapped. The clash of interests originated with the French occupation in 1853 of the island of New Caledonia, at the southern end of the ocean shelf from which the New Hebrides themselves protrude. It is almost as large as Yorkshire and Lancashire together, and its capital, Noumea, with a fine land-locked harbour (latitude 22 deg. S., longitude 166 deg. E.), is about 800 miles east-north-east of Brisbane. Close to New Caledonia are the smaller islands of Pines, Maré, and Loyalty; and strung out to the northward over 7 degrees of latitude are the beautiful and fertile New Hebrides, the most distant of which is only 400 miles from Noumea.

**The French Settlement of New Caledonia.**—French missionaries landed in New Caledonia in 1843, and it was claimed then for France, but on Great Britain objecting the claim was renounced. In 1851 a landing party from a French man-of-war took possession, but the annexation was not formally declared until 1853. Almost at the same moment a British naval officer was hoisting the British flag at Isle of Pines. The chiefs who had favoured the step afterwards sided with the French and the flag was withdrawn.

It was a settled aim of French policy at the time of the



first claim to secure in the Pacific one or two sites which would serve the dual purpose of naval bases and penal settlements. The failure of the transport system in the Australian colonies was already definite, owing partly to economic reasons but chiefly to the determined objection of the white settlers themselves; but this repugnance had not been sufficiently canvassed to lead France to anticipate opposition from the same source.

New Caledonia had been taken possession of by Captain Cook by right of discovery. Nevertheless Great Britain did not assert her rights when the French occupied the island. It is bootless to consider what might have been the trend of Pacific policy had England confirmed all the cessions and acts of possession of her scientific navigators. Certainly international rivalries in the great ocean would have taken quite a different aspect. Naval officers had several times recommended the occupation of New Caledonia. When Sir George Grey, Governor of New Zealand, was cruising throughout the wide jurisdiction of his first patent, he arrived at the Isle of Pines in 1853 in time to hear that the French were already in New Caledonia, and he wrote to Earl Grey at once pointing out how great a danger to the future of the British colonies this constituted.<sup>1</sup> The Government of New South Wales reiterated the warning, and in face of these protests the occupation did not become formal until 24th September 1853.

**The Penal Settlement.**—The natives were not completely reduced, as the result of a series of small expeditions, until 1859. Five years later the transportation of convicts commenced. In 1865 these numbered 245; the soldiers and free settlers 2000. By 1870 1500 free colonists were counter-balanced by 2000 convicts. In the following years 4000 supporters of the Commune were added to the island population.

Australia made a restive protest, and soon after the political prisoners were amnestied. But criminals took their place in increasing numbers and saturated the white community. By the end of 1884 17,300 convicts had been sent to New Caledonia from France.

**Bishop Selwyn's Ambition.**—The British interest in New Caledonia and the New Hebrides was at first of a purely missionary character. The letters-patent of Selwyn as first Bishop of New Zealand contained the same clerical error which appeared in the letters-patent of the colony itself, whereby the boundaries extended far north of the equator.

<sup>1</sup> P.R.O., C.O. 209, vol. cxviii.

Selwyn was the last man to complain of such a mistake. On the contrary he took the first opportunity of making a cruise amongst the myriad islands of his ocean diocese to judge of the prospects for Christianity.

This came in 1848, and Selwyn afterwards wrote home hopefully offering to take spiritual charge of all the islands west of 180 deg. as far as the coast of Australia, a proposal which would give him the New Hebrides, the Solomons, the New Britain Archipelago, and New Guinea, with all the Line Islands. He contemplated establishing himself first of all in the Isle of Pines, to open the way to the spiritual conquest of New Caledonia and the New Hebrides, and he looked forward to the time when his work should fuse with that of the Bishop of Borneo in the East Indies, thus covering the whole of the Western Pacific.<sup>1</sup>

When he revisited the islands in 1851, however, Selwyn found his teachers thriving on some of the other islands—notably Maré, where afterwards the Presbyterians suffered much persecution. The Isle of Pines was occupied by Roman Catholics, and he forbore to establish his mission there, feeling that there was enough work for all to do without overlapping. A Vicariate-Apostolic had been established by the French Roman Catholics in New Caledonia in 1847, embracing the islands of Pines, Loyalty, and Belep. The priests were a most devoted class, and gave martyrs here just as freely as in other parts of the world. For a while their cause did not progress smoothly, and, as elsewhere in the Pacific, the active assistance of French warships tended rather to accentuate the friction.

**French Attitude to Protestant Missions.**—With the political expansion of France the outlook for the Protestant missions, even in islands where they had hitherto been the sole Christians, became less and less hopeful. It is only fair to recognise the natural tendency of missionaries already established to encourage in the native mind, even if they do not create it, a feeling of hostility to new missions. In the Western Pacific, as in Tahiti, the menace of a rival religion entering the field drove the Protestants to look for assistance to their own Government, and by a natural tendency to promote movements inimical to the establishment of French authority.

The Loyalty Islands are so close to New Caledonia that they came naturally into its orbit. Long before they were definitively annexed France had assumed a predominant

<sup>1</sup> Tucker's *Life of Selwyn*.

position, and the Roman Catholic missionaries made no secret of their power to impose their religion on the natives. The priest at Lifou boasted to Bishop Patteson in 1858 that the French Government had a sufficient naval and military force at hand to render him any assistance he might require, but added that if the people behaved properly he would do nothing to interfere with their religion. About the same time the captain of H.M.S. *Iris* informed Patteson that "the French will meet with no opposition from the English Government."<sup>1</sup> Evidently this extension of the French protectorate had already been discussed in Europe and agreed to by the British Government, and all Patteson could do was to make the best terms he could for the toleration of the Protestants.

It is not surprising that we should find him urgently demanding that all unoccupied islands should be taken under British protection. Nor could he fail to appreciate the real value of a man-of-war to a mission, "not with the idea of any protection being required, but with the intention of supporting the mission and giving help." A few months later he received just the help he most appreciated when he made a cruise amongst his islands in H.M.S. *Cordelia*. It is rather a pathetic reflection that so few years later a British man-of-war, commanded by the most humane of captains, was to take vengeance for his death at one of the islands.

**The Melanesian Mission.**—When the bishops of Australia and New Zealand met in Sydney in 1850 they were anxious, "relying on Divine providence, to adopt plans for the propagation of the gospel among the heathen races of Australasia and the adjacent islands of the Western Pacific." On Selwyn's suggestion the Australasian Board of Missions was set up, and it was decided, owing to the unhealthiness of the climate, that the work should be carried out rather by means of long visits in the healthy season than by the occupation of permanent stations.<sup>2</sup>

The bishops were in some doubt as to their competence to act as an ecclesiastical synod for fear that they should impugn the supremacy of the Queen, and it was some years before they felt quite authorised in their actions. When the See of New Zealand was established in 1841, with the inaccurate boundaries transcribed from the letters-patent of the colony itself, a vast area of 4700 square miles of ocean, with myriads of scattered islands, seemed to be the arduous

<sup>1</sup> *Life of John Coleridge Patteson*, by Charlotte M. Yonge.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1852, No. 355.

lot of the bishop. He was just the man to push his labours far north of the equator when it was obviously intended he should remain far to the southward. It appeared, too, that before the Board of Missions could undertake the creation of the proposed ocean diocese Selwyn, who had a life appointment, would have to resign. This, too, was repugnant to the pioneering character of the man.

At length, in 1861, the consecration of a bishop for the Melanesian field was achieved, not by royal mandate, as was customary, but by virtue of a despatch from the Secretary of State (the Duke of Newcastle), who wrote :—<sup>1</sup>

“The bishops of New Zealand are at liberty, without the invasion of the royal prerogative or infringement of the law of England, to exercise what Bishop Selwyn describes as their inherent power of consecrating Mr Patteson or any other person to take charge of the Melanesian Islands, provided that the consecration should take place beyond British territory.”

But the Attorney-General of New Zealand, citing the consecration of Bishop Mackenzie in Capetown Cathedral, held that there was no reason why Patteson should not be consecrated in Auckland. And so it was done, on 24th February 1861.

**Success and Authority of the Protestants.**—The first Protestant missionaries settled in the New Hebrides in 1839 under the auspices of the London Missionary Society. Before long the care of the field was assigned to the Presbyterian mission bodies of Canada, Scotland, Australia, and New Zealand. It is to this association, with the people of Australia in particular, that much of the vigour of the agitation for British annexation fifty years later was due. By agreement with Selwyn, some time prior to 1850, the Presbyterians abandoned a few of the northern islands on condition that they were left alone in the others. The Roman Catholic missions arrived subsequently, but did not attain to nearly so much influence.

The earlier missionaries literally took their lives in their hands amongst the savage and treacherous natives of these Melanesian islands. It was at Erromanga that Williams lost his life; at Nukapu, Patteson; at Ysabel, Bishop Epalle. Many teachers were killed; many murderous attacks made on trading and mission ships alike. Where Christianity was established, some missionaries formed their own civil courts under the authority of the chiefs to control and

<sup>1</sup> *Life of J. C. Patteson*, by C. M. Yonge.



police their flocks, a first step towards that missionary government which we see more fully developed in Polynesia.

Founded in 1848, the Presbyterian Mission had by 1887 extended to all the islands except Pentecost, Aoba, and Maewo, which had been allotted to the less opulent Melanesian Mission.

"The only people who were constantly on the spot," says Captain E. G. Rason, R.N. (late Resident Deputy Commissioner),<sup>1</sup> "working for peace, law, and order, were the Presbyterian missionaries, and in process of time each one became a sort of bishop within the area appointed for his ministry, that is, as far as the native Christians were concerned. These missionary bishops, where the island was all or mostly Christian, arrogated to themselves considerable power, and consequently came into conflict with the local settlers, none of whom came up to the standard required by the missionary."

**Protestants in Loyalty.**—The Protestants had been established in Loyalty since 1845. Until the arrival of the Roman Catholic missionaries in 1866, the work of the Presbyterians was conspicuously successful. Thenceforward there was nothing but friction. It was the policy of the French authorities to eradicate by all means the great influence wielded amongst the natives by the English Protestants, and it was not difficult to pick quarrels with them. The Governor of New Caledonia in the early years of the seventies told Mr Brenchley the whole story, "how he had forbidden the Protestants to make any more converts. There was a French law or ordinance forbidding the further expansion of the Protestant religion in the country because, as it was French, the Catholic faith its religion, and French its adopted language, they would have to undo what the missionaries might do, and to teach French in the schools and propagate the Catholic religion in place of Protestantism."<sup>2</sup>

By 1880 the trouble in Loyalty had become a matter for diplomatic discussion. The French Government complained of the conduct of the Rev. John Jones, in the island of Maré. Granville ordered an investigation, and the result was so much in the missionary's favour that he decided he could not ask the Society to withdraw him from Loyalty (Granville to French Ambassador, 23rd September 1881).

<sup>1</sup> Paper read before the Royal Colonial Institute, 19th April 1910.

<sup>2</sup> *Jottings during the Cruise of H.M.S. "Curacoa,"* by J. L. Brenchley, 1873.



**Anglo-French Understanding, 1878.**—During the decades before Australia developed an oversea trade, French influence spread through the New Hebrides by the sheer force of propinquity. The high-handed steps taken to oust British influence from New Caledonia and Loyalty, and the continued reports of aggression against the missionaries, gave rise to much uneasiness in Australia. At the root of the anxiety was the discriminating conduct towards the English missionaries, and the fear that the islands in French hands might be used for penal purposes. There was already a strong feeling that the only sure way of preventing such results was by British annexation, and the colonists boldly demanded that step.

In 1878 the Australian agitation for annexation attracted attention in France, where already French interests in the New Hebrides were cherished; and the French Ambassador drew the attention of the Foreign Office to the matter:—

“Sans attacher à ce mouvement de l'opinion une très grande importance,” he wrote,<sup>1</sup> “mon gouvernement tient toute fois à déclarer que pour ce qui le concerne il n'a pas le projet de porter atteinte à l'indépendance des Nouvelles Hébrides, et il serait heureux de savoir que, de son côté, le gouvernement de S.M. est également disposé à la respecter.”

With the concurrence of the Colonial Office, Derby replied that “Her Majesty's Government have no intention of proposing any measures to Parliament with a view of changing the condition of independence which the New Hebrides islands now enjoy.”

This exchange of notes constitutes the much debated “understanding” of 1878, which became a traditional grievance and obstacle to the consummation of the wishes of Australia in regard to the islands. It is hard to condemn it in view of the interests existing at the time. British settlers in the group were not very numerous. According to Captain Bridge,<sup>2</sup> of H.M.S. *Espiegle*, they numbered only twenty-six in 1883, and most of them were missionaries and their families. But even that was more than double the total number of foreign residents of all other nationalities. Communications were chiefly with the neighbouring French possessions, but the missionaries were closely in touch with their supporters in Australia, and particularly in the colony

<sup>1</sup> French Ambassador to Foreign Secretary, 18th January 1878: P.P., C. 3863.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1883, C. 3641.

of Victoria, where they had their headquarters. It was this association, and the fear of penal settlements being established, that stirred Australian anxiety.

**New French Activities.**—In 1883 there were several new reasons for alarm. Large tracts of land were being purchased in the island of Efate, both from natives and from British settlers, and claims were even set up to the island of Iririki, in Vila Harbour, of which the missionaries themselves believed they possessed the title. Moreover, a company was being formed at New Caledonia to colonise the New Hebrides, and so “force France to take possession of the group as Britain had to do in Fiji.”

The Compagnie Calédonienne des Nouvelles Hébrides, as it was called, had a capital of 500,000 francs and claimed to have established trading stations throughout the group, and to have acquired an area of 245,000 hectares of good agricultural land. The produce shipped for the first year of its operations—chiefly copra, maize, and coffee—was valued at 200,000 francs.<sup>1</sup>

Feeling in Australia ran very high, and five of the colonies sent petitions to the Colonial Office demanding action. Victoria naturally took the lead, and the Agents-General of the colonies in London made joint representations to Lord Derby. In their celebrated Memorandum of 21st July they remarked:—

“At some time of which we are not aware a rather vague understanding appears to have been come to with the Government of France that the New Hebrides should be relinquished as a possession of the Crown and their independence recognised.”<sup>2</sup>

It seems that when the understanding of 1878 was entered into, Sir George Grey, then Premier of New Zealand, protested that the islands were within the boundaries of that colony. The Imperial Government replied that that was no longer the case, and moreover, that it had no intention of proceeding in the direction of annexation or a political protectorate. Some light is thrown on the suggestion of a prior understanding with France by the fact that in the Western Pacific Order-in-Council of 1877 the New Hebrides are omitted from the islands which are specifically mentioned as within the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. If they were regarded as being under the jurisdiction of a civilised power (to wit, France) this would explain it, and yet the High

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1883, C. 3863.

<sup>2</sup> C. 3814.

Commissioner appointed Captain Cyprian Bridge, R.N., to be his deputy there.

Derby's reply to the Agents-General merely affirmed the position previously taken up. The independence of the New Hebrides, he said, had been recognised and accepted up to that time by both governments, whereas the "Loyalty Islands, being close to New Caledonia, are to be looked upon as dependencies of the French Government in that island."<sup>1</sup>

**Fresh Anglo-French Understanding, 1883.**—In view of the new agitation the French Government asked for a new assurance that the British Government did not propose to interfere with the *status quo*.

"De cette époque le Gouvernement Français avait fait connaître le prise qu'il attachait, en raison des rapports établis entre ses établissements de la Nouvelle Calédonie et les Nouvelles Hébrides, à ce qu'aucun changement ne fût apporté à la situation politique de ce dernier groupe d'Iles. Loin de diminuer l'importance de ces rapports, n'a depuis lors, cessé d'accroître, ils présentent aujourd'hui pour notre colonie un intérêt de premier ordre. Le Gouvernement de la République a, par suite, le devoir de s'assurer si les déclarations de 1878 ont pour le Gouvernement de la Reine, comme pour lui, conservé toute leur valeur, et d'insister, s'il y a lieu, pour le maintien de l'état actuel des choses" (French Chargé d'Affaires to Granville, 9th July 1883).

To this Granville returned an immediate assurance that his Government "also considered the agreement to be binding."<sup>2</sup>

**The Marquis de Ray's Expedition.**—In September 1879 an expedition left Flushing in the ship *Chandernagore* with the object of founding a colony under the name "The Free Colony of Port Breton," in the New Britain or Solomon Islands, or the non-Dutch portion of New Guinea. The colonists had to make their departure from Flushing because the French Government would not recognise the undertaking, and the Belgian Government forbade it to leave from Antwerp—disabilities which accounted for a very large proportion of Germans being included.

The expedition was commanded by M. Charles Noetinger. Portion of it landed at the Laughlin Islands and others near Cape Bougainville, in New Ireland, where they arrived in January 1880. It was an ill-advised and badly managed expedition, and parties were dropped at different parts of

<sup>1</sup> P.P. C. 3814.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

the islands without equipment and even without drugs. Within a few weeks almost every member of the expedition was sick and helpless. Utterly dispirited and demoralised, those who could get passages with casual traders accepted them to escape from their hopeless predicament.

Later in the year other emigrants, including some Italians, arrived in French ships sailing under the Liberian flag. The whole party then moved to English and Irish Coves, and commenced to form plantations and make some ordered progress as a colony. Yet another vessel, *La Nouvelle Bretagne*, arrived in the spring of 1881 with 150 more adventurers. She had no sooner dropped anchor than word came from France that the company was in financial difficulties and the Marquis himself was "surrounded by traitors and enemies." The troubles of the outcasts were overwhelming, and after losing their most trusted leaders, they were rescued by the good offices of the missionaries and taken in a starving condition to New Caledonia. Some of them later received grants of land in New South Wales, where they founded the settlement of New Italy, between the Clarence and the Richmond rivers. Of the whole original party 40 were Germans, 25 French, 6 Belgians, and 11 Swiss.<sup>1</sup>

**Further Developments at Loyalty.** — Early in the eighties the French authorities in Loyalty decreed that the schools must be carried on in the French language, and that where French schools could be opened immediately the others should be closed forthwith.

"The only thing which the administration desire," said the official letter, "absolutely the only purpose which they have in view is the spread of the French language and influence in those islands which are French; and no question of religion can in these circumstances be raised, but the most complete religious liberty being left from that point of view to all the natives."

The decree was a challenge to the Protestant missions, which in the English language had carried out all the education the natives had hitherto received. The British Government was appealed to by the missionaries, but it had to plead, reluctantly, no doubt, that it could not interfere with the internal arrangement of islands which were under French sovereignty. Mr Jones struggled on bravely for three years more in conditions of despair. In 1887 the end came. His disputes with the Government led inevitably to

<sup>1</sup> *George Brown, D.D.: an autobiography.*

his expulsion. On 8th December the Governor of New Caledonia issued a decree setting forth that his proceedings were calculated to compromise public order and tranquillity, and he was expelled. There was further diplomatic correspondence, in which France asserted her right to deal in this manner with a foreigner who had placed himself in open revolt against authority.

The incident ended very much as that of Pritchard at Tahiti. M. Goblet, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, denied that there was any ground for uneasiness in England regarding liberty of religious worship in Loyalty. What had happened was "merely a measure of local police directed against a person who had continued in spite of warning to stir up the population of the island against the French authorities, and to foment religious discord between the British and French missionaries."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5581.



## CHAPTER XX

### THE RECIDIVISTE QUESTION AND THE CONDOMINIUM

**The Recidiviste Problem.**—The agitation for British action in the New Hebrides was much strengthened by the proposal of the French Government to pass a law with the object of making fuller use of the penal settlement at New Caledonia. The most objectionable feature of the proposal was that transported criminals were to be free within the bounds of the colony itself, their crime having been expiated by the mere fact of being removed from France. As Australian statesmen pointed out, this in practice meant simply that they might not return to France. Apart from that, the scheme would obviously have been a temptation to both the *libérés* and their guards to be lax about leaving New Caledonia for neighbouring countries.

"It is vain for anyone to imagine," wrote Sir Francis Bell, Agent-General for New Zealand (30th November 1883), "that habitual criminals, steeped in vice and debauchery, and stained with every crime, to whom a distinct promise is given of absolute freedom on their arrival in the French colony, will really be interned within its limits."<sup>1</sup>

There were constant escapes of convicts, both time-expired and actual, from Noumea to Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. Gavan Duffy's Victorian commission on the treaty-making power had drawn attention to the subject, and Queensland took the lead in 1881 in trying to deal with the leakage by means of a statute. The Imperial Government refused its assent, and the other colonies understood thereby that this was a matter of foreign relations which could only be redressed through the Imperial Government itself.

**Derby's Sympathy.**—The grievance was real and substantial, and Derby told the Foreign Office in August that

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1884, C. 3863.

he was convinced it would not be possible long to resist colonial legislation for the exclusion of undesirables. The sending of convicts to New Caledonia under conditions which permitted them to escape to the adjacent British colonies could only be regarded as an unfriendly act.

The annexation movement in 1883 gained much weight from the continued reports of French criminals being discovered by the police of the large Australian cities, and it must be said for Downing Street that while fighting stubbornly against annexation it did its best to lay the grievance by pressing the French Government to cease sending criminals to the Pacific at all, and to take proper precautions that those already there should not be allowed to escape.

The colonies were all supporting a vigorous annexation policy before the end of the year, in the belief that this was the only way to prevent France from using the New Hebrides as she had already used New Caledonia. New South Wales, as a rule, was less enthusiastic than the others on these matters, but Mr Stuart came into line regarding the New Hebrides. He felt personally that after the repeated exchange of assurances between England and France the rights of France in the group would have to be recognised, and he suggested (8th September 1883), possibly for the first time, that "a joint protectorate by England and France over the New Hebrides and other groups would be the best and most practical solution of the question." Nevertheless, he felt that their occupation by any foreign power would be so detrimental to colonial interests that "rather than leave such a contingency open, I would urge as strongly as anyone that the Imperial Government should annex them." And on the same day he instructed the Agent-General to that effect.

**The Intercolonial Convention, 1883.**—When the conference of premiers met at Sydney at the end of the year, the New Hebrides ranked almost equally with New Guinea as a matter for urgent attention, and the report of the Rev. J. G. Paton that "the vessels and men-of-war of at least five nations have been cruising among our islands for purposes of annexation," showed that no time was to be lost.

The Convention recognised that the understanding of 1878 was an obstacle to annexation by Great Britain, but it insisted that further acquisition by foreign powers south of the equator would be in the highest degree injurious to colonial interests. Eventually a resolution was passed unanimously that the understanding with France should

give way to "some more definite engagement which shall secure those islands from falling under any foreign dominion," and that the British Government should seize any opportunity of negotiating "with the object of obtaining control of the islands in the interests of Australasia."

New South Wales undoubtedly acted as a brake on the impetuosity of Victoria, and it was due to the steadying influence of the Premier of the Mother Colony (Mr A. Stuart) and his colleagues that the resolution was toned down to its final form. Mr Service, the Premier of Victoria, who petulantly referred to the moderation of New South Wales as "lukewarmness," said<sup>1</sup> that the southern and western colonies could not bear the idea that any arrangements should be made which would prevent the islands eventually coming under the control of Great Britain.<sup>2</sup>

The New South Wales delegates, on the other hand, congratulated themselves that while they freely expressed their opinions they secured their main object, namely, that those opinions "should be couched in language of statesman-like moderation, so as to facilitate the action of the Imperial Government and to prevent its embarrassment with any foreign power."<sup>3</sup>

**A Protest against Transportation.**—The Convention, too, declared itself emphatically against the intention of France to transport large numbers of relapsed criminals to the Pacific, and hoped that existing penal settlements in their neighbourhood would soon cease to exist. In spite of the disallowance of the Queensland Bill a few years earlier, the Colonies decided to pass uniform laws to prevent the landing on their shores of escapees from New Caledonia.

Almost at the moment when the delegates were passing this resolution, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs was assuring Lord Lyons that the proposals of his Government were as harmless as possible, and that the protection of other nations was specially secured by the remoteness of the prisons and the severity of the penalties for attempting to escape (*Note Verbale* French Foreign Minister to Lord Lyons, in despatch 3rd December 1883).<sup>4</sup>

In acknowledging the resolutions of the Convention, Derby reaffirmed the attitude taken up by the British Government

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1884, C. 3863.

<sup>2</sup> Speech at Parliament House, Melbourne.

<sup>3</sup> Hon. W. B. Dalley, Q.C., in the Legislative Council of New South Wales.

<sup>4</sup> P.P. 1884, C. 3863, p. 68.

in reply to the Agents-General six months earlier, thus disposing for the moment of any talk of annexation. But he took up very vigorously with the Foreign Office the matter of the penal settlement at New Caledonia.

**Lord Lyons's Blunt Language.**—It is rather interesting to find M. Jules Ferry, within a month of Bismarck's conversations with Mr Meade and Sir E. Malet, using almost precisely the same language regarding the feeling in Australia. M. Ferry asked the Ambassador whether "the emotion which appeared on the surface was genuine and sincere. Was it not rather caused by the thirst for annexation of territory with which the colonists were beset, than by any real alarm" as to the consequences of French transportation? He could not understand the apprehensions about which the colonies made so much, since the relapsed criminals would not be actual convicts, they would not be numerous, and they would be prohibited from leaving the island. M. Ferry said France sincerely desired to show every consideration, but "he could not admit that any foreign country had a right to prevent France from sending convicts to one of her own colonies." Lord Lyons protested that he had not wished to put the matter on that sort of footing, but held that "it was reasonable for a friend who lived next door to ask one not to make his house a danger to his neighbours" (Lyons to Granville, 9th January 1884).

The colonies were not likely to accept these assurances as sufficient, when at the moment their police authorities had records of 247 escapees and expirées who had effected their landing in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria between 1874 and 1883. It was asserted that prisoners who had served the full period to which they were sentenced were permitted to embark from New Caledonia as free passengers. Some of the convicts on completing their sentences were admittedly free, except to return to France, and concerning these Derby remarked to the Foreign Office: "The French Government have no right to impose on Her Majesty's colonies a burden which they have removed from France. If the convicts are thought to be unfit to be at liberty in their own country, it is clearly unjustifiable to allow them to be deported to Australia. The objection which is entertained in Australia is but the same as that entertained in France, and it appears that the French Government should take the same precautions to prevent the landing of convicts on Australian shores that they would to prevent their landing in France."



**The Colonial Office Sympathetic.**—The Colonial Office and the Australian governments saw eye to eye on this matter, at any rate, and the Foreign Office was hardly less emphatic in its protests. It was a strong point in the demand made on France that England had herself ceased transporting convicts to Australia precisely for the reasons that were now being urged.

While the Bill made slow progress through the Senate Committee, the colonies continued their bombardment of resolutions and protests, and Lyons pressed the French Government for an assurance that recidivistes would not be sent to New Caledonia at all.

**The Senate Compromises.**—The report of the Senate Committee, tabled on 29th July 1884, afforded a certain amount of relief to the anxieties of the colonies. It showed that while the Governor of French Guiana was anxious to have as many convicts as possible, the Governor of New Caledonia was just as urgent that none at all should be sent to his colony. He had no means of finding employment for them, and feared that if unemployed they would be a dangerous element. In an almost impassioned appeal<sup>1</sup> he said:—

“Je me trouve dans l'obligation de déclarer que les terres, tant en Nouvelle-Calédonia qu'aux îles Loyalty, dont l'administration peut disposer, ne permettent pas d'appliquer la loi sur la relégation, conformément au vœu du législateur. La Nouvelle Calédonie est impuissante à donner du travail aux libérés des travaux forcés, dont le nombre augmente chaque jour: l'envoi des récidivistes ne pourra qu'augmenter le nombre de ces hommes non employés, et qui resteront fatalement à la charge de l'administration, tout en constituant un véritable danger.”

Room could only be found for them, he added, by dispossessing the natives, and that was a course which would arouse passionate protests from both Australians and English.<sup>2</sup>

M. Ferry then promised that when the debate was resumed in the Senate, the Government would proceed with every desire to show a spirit of *bon voisinage*. He offered, moreover, to enter into a special extradition treaty to deal with the escapees who might reach Australia.<sup>3</sup> This Derby

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1885, C. 4217.

<sup>2</sup> Report of M. Pallu de la Barrière, Governor of New Caledonia, 8th October 1883.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Walsham to Granville, 9th October: P.P., C. 4217.



hesitated to entertain, because he believed the colonies would prefer to trust to legislative measures of their own for the exclusion of undesirables (Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 27th October).

**The Annexation Fever.**—When Germany seized upon the northern part of New Guinea, there was something like a fever of annexation raging amongst people who had any interests in the Pacific. Relations with Germany were so strained that the British Government adopted the very wise precaution of asking for some assurance as to what was likely to happen next, and what native states, if any, might be considered secure from seizure. Sadly disappointed about New Guinea, the colonies begged Derby to make sure that France would not next succumb to the fever and lay hands violently upon the New Hebrides. There was some ground for fear in the exceptional activity at the moment of the New Caledonia company at Mallicolo and Vate, at which latter place they had bought out the rights of the last English proprietor. It was certainly disquieting, considering that the quarrel with Germany had to some extent thrown Pacific affairs into the melting-pot; and Derby moved the Foreign Office "to make some intimation to the French Government that Her Majesty's Government take no exception to the proceedings which have been reported, because they feel satisfied that they can fully rely upon the loyal observance by the French Government of the understanding that the neutrality of the islands is to be maintained."

The disclosure of Mr Meade's unhappy "conversations" at this moment did not serve to allay the anxiety of the Australians. It will be remembered that in his discussion with Dr Busch at Berlin he had emphasised the claims of France in the Pacific. He had even gone so far as to suggest as a basis of the arrangement: "France to be allowed to take the New Hebrides group, which lie away from the others, and would naturally fall into the New Caledonian system."<sup>1</sup> It is true that he explained in a later memorandum—to Granville—that he merely wished to show that Germany and England were not the only powers to be considered, and that "questions between England and France respecting this particular group were our own concern . . . without going into details as to what we should require from France as the equivalent for the withdrawal of the under-

<sup>1</sup> See Meade's Memoranda, 14th December 1884 and 10th February 1885: C. 4290.

standing as to the independence of the New Hebrides," an understanding which could not be surrendered "except upon terms which would be thoroughly satisfactory to the Australasian colonies." If the suggestion was not made seriously the whole thing was unfortunate; and the conclusion arrived at in Australia, that antipodean interests were being bartered away *in camera* for the sake of placating foreign nations, was not unreasonable.

Gladstone denied in the House of Commons on 5th March that there had been any proposal that France should assume the sovereignty of the New Hebrides unless on terms satisfactory to the Australian colonies, but this only served to increase the suspicion that the matter had really been entertained. Petitions continued to reach the Colonial Office from all parts of the colonies, until anxiety was set at rest for the moment by Derby's assurance to the Presbyterian Church of Otago (New Zealand) that the Colonial Office would never entertain any proposal for French annexation "without consulting the Australasian colonies, and without securing conditions satisfactory to those colonies; and further, that no government of this country would ever think of giving over the New Hebrides to France without taking care that they would never become a penal settlement."<sup>1</sup> There is even here the suggestion in terms that eventually the sovereignty would pass to France; but for the time being it was satisfactory.

Within the next few months (24th December 1885) Germany agreed to renounce for herself in favour of France any claims she might have had in the New Hebrides and Tahiti, and undertook not to interpose any obstacles to French sovereignty in New Hebrides, should such a step be proposed.

**The Western Pacific Commission.**—When the Commission sat to consider the working of the Western Pacific Orders-in-Council, it took cognisance of the New Hebrides as not being within the jurisdiction of any civilised power, and with all the bluntness which characterised Gordon's utterances it laid down<sup>2</sup> that in such groups, the inhabitants being heathens and for the most part cannibals, "the less we as a government have to do with such communities the better. It is not to the influence of government, but to that of the missionary and trader, that we must in the first instance look for the improvement of their condition."

The Commission saw, however, that the centre of gravity

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 4584.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 3905.

of the jurisdiction of the High Commission had shifted towards the west, and that such islands were certain to require a good deal of attention, and it recommended that one of the five deputy commissioners should have his headquarters at Havannah harbour.

**France's Obstinacy about Transportation.**—Though the report of M. Pallu convinced the French Senate that New Caledonia was out of the question for the purposes of the Recidivistes Bill, M. Waldeck Rousseau strenuously resisted the proposal that it should be specifically excepted. Granville, becoming impatient, instructed Lyons to make an urgent appeal to the French Government to bring about an understanding, with an overt suggestion of hostile legislation by the colonies themselves (Granville to Lyons, 16th March 1885). But Ferry stood upon the principle that "the French Government could not abdicate its freedom of action with regard to a French colony by an engagement with a foreign power." And it must be remembered that France had resented for some years the refusal of England to permit her to make definitive her protectorate in Raiatea, which had existed *de facto* for nearly forty years.

Ferry's successor, De Freycinet, was scarcely better disposed, and the Bill passed on 12th May 1885, without the desired safeguard having been inserted. It was left to the administration to fix the places of relegation of convicts. A commission was set up to draft the regulations, and in the subsequent Bill to appropriate the necessary funds Guiana only was referred to, no mention being made of New Caledonia (Lyons to Salisbury, 28th July 1885).

**French Military Posts Established.**—Early in 1886 the Federal Council of Australia framed an address for the Imperial Government, pointing out that, as far as it had gone, the introduction of Christianity and civilisation in the New Hebrides was the work of Australian men and Australian money, and that naturally there was a keen public feeling attaching to the future of the group. It is quite clear, on the other hand, that the French Government had never contemplated retiring. The absorption of the New Hebrides in New Caledonia was logical and almost inevitable, but for the special interests created by the activity of the Protestant missionaries. There are suggestions all through the despatches of the Colonial Office that somehow or other the islands must eventually be French, and that Britain only retained her interest out of deference to Australian opinion, and out of regard for the missionaries.

Dilke, writing at the end of 1889,<sup>1</sup> repeats the statement that an arrangement had been practically come to with the French Government, whereby France should assume the sovereignty on covenanting to cease all transportation to the Pacific, to protect the British missionaries, and to arrive at a general understanding on Pacific affairs. The proposal is said to have originated with New Zealand, and to have been killed, when on the point of acceptance, by the opposition of Victoria, the Mother Colony of the missions.

Yet is it conceivable that any British government, knowing what had been the fate of Protestant missions in almost every such case, and what at that moment was happening to the mission in Loyalty, could have faced Parliament with such a proposition? Rosebery warmly repudiated the suggestion, and there does not seem to be any documentary evidence of the existence of the scheme.

Lest it might be thought that the anxieties for the treatment of Protestant missionaries were unfounded, the Australians could point not only to what was happening in Loyalty, but to the documentary statement of policy avowed by the Governor of New Caledonia (M. Pallu) in his report on transportation:—

“On peut affirmer en effet, qu’il n’y a pas un indigène qui ne trouverait des défenseurs passionnés parmi les Australiens et les Anglais. Je cherche à extirper l’influence Anglaise de ces îles par les écoles, par tous les moyens en mon pouvoir : mais je suis en présence d’une situation trentenaire : la France aurait de l’ennui si une pareille combinaison partait les Chambres. Je laisse de côté la contradiction, malheureusement trop flagrante, que toutes les nations trouveraient ici entre les principes que nous aimons à affirmer et notre conduite.”<sup>2</sup>

**French Military Posts Established.**—In June 1886, France advanced the New Hebrides question a step by proceeding without warning or notice of any kind to establish one or two military posts in the islands. There was no doubt as to the fact of occupation, “but they have assured us,” Salisbury stated in the House of Lords, “in terms whose earnestness and sincerity we have no right to doubt, that they have no intention of permanently occupying those islands, and therefore no definite character ought to be attached to their proceedings. France had stated that the step was forced on her by the occurrence of outrages,

<sup>1</sup> *Problems of Greater Britain*, vol. i., pp. 433-5.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 4217.



and that she would be glad to withdraw as soon as satisfactory arrangements were made for peace and security.<sup>1</sup> Carnarvon pointed out how one after another of the Pacific archipelagos—Society, Low, Austral, and Raiatea—had been occupied by France in spite of definite understandings. He quite agreed that “no Australian would, or could, or ought to, regard the prospect without a feeling of considerable anxiety.” Lord Granville admitted that his first impulse on hearing what had occurred had been to send ships to the scene, not as a menace, but to put both countries on an equal footing; but it was thought this might cause friction. Nor was it necessary, since the act of occupation had been consistently disowned by the French Government.<sup>2</sup>

Political uncertainties in France delayed the negotiations and enhanced the uneasiness of the Australians. The position was an awkward one for the British Government, which could not reply except in awkward terms to its critics. For more than a year the occupation continued to be a subject of unsatisfactory comment. The Government in August 1887 feared that to set a term to the occupation would involve acquiescence in the meantime. France wished to introduce the question of the Suez Canal, to be discussed concurrently. But Salisbury firmly refused any such complications. Meanwhile, it was well known that a considerable number of settlers were going to the New Hebrides direct from France; but this, of course, was perfectly legitimate on the part of either power.

**The Convention of 1887.**—At length the discussions, with the new Rouvier Ministry, came to a happy conclusion on 24th October, when separate conventions were agreed to governing the New Hebrides and the Suez Canal.

France had endeavoured on numerous occasions to contract for the abrogation of the Declaration of 1847, which prevented her completing her sovereignty over Raiatea. The abrogation had been practically arranged under the Newfoundland Fisheries Convention of 1880, but this was never ratified. Great Britain now agreed to it in consideration of a plan being agreed upon “for the future protection of life and property in the New Hebrides by means of a joint commission” (Article I.).<sup>3</sup> The Convention provided for a Joint Naval Commission of British and French officers, to be charged with the duty of maintaining order and protecting life and property. In the regulations, which were

<sup>1</sup> Hansard Debates, House of Lords, 2nd May 1887.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> P.P., C. 5256.



framed a few months later, it was laid down that in the event of a disturbance breaking out, the Joint Commission should immediately assemble and decide what action to take. No naval officer, whether British or French, was to take independent or isolated action. The French military posts in the islands were withdrawn on 15th March 1888, and in May, accordingly, the declaration for the abrogation of the instrument of 1847 was signed.<sup>1</sup>

The Commission for a while worked very satisfactorily. It was not an easy task that it had to carry out, for the rivalries of the two nationalities at that time were world-wide and real: and in the New Hebrides they were not rendered any less bitter by the encouragement given to the respective sides by their nationals in Australia and in New Caledonia.

**International Rivalries.**—When Mr Romilly arrived as consul in 1888 he was in a most awkward position. Clinging presumably to the fiction of an independent state, the Foreign Office had nominated him as British Consul to the New Hebrides, and he asked pertinently to whom he was accredited. Every attribute of a sovereign state was lacking, and when the office had been in existence for eighteen months it was quietly abolished. The consular instructions, flags, stamps, and seals for the consulate only reached the New Hebrides when the office was being abolished.

There being no consular residence, Romilly chose "the nearest civilised abode to the district," trusting to being able to charter a vessel to visit his jurisdiction. He went innocently to reside in Noumea, but his presence there gave rise to great jealousy on the part of the French, who fancied they saw in it a first step towards the setting up of British sovereignty in the disputed islands. The Colonial Office then instructed him to make his headquarters at Port Sandwich, in the New Hebrides. Here he found the rivalry of the nations no less warm. On Christmas Day 1888 there was a collision, happily bloodless, between the two sections of the population.<sup>2</sup>

**The Entente Understanding, 1904.**—Long before the end of the century the Joint Commission, in its existing form, had outlived its usefulness. The subject was a delicate one to handle, since the federation of the Australian colonies, and the more outspoken attitude of New Zealand on Pacific matters, promised that the British Government would find

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5372.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters from the Western Pacific*, by H. H. Romilly.

more difficulties than ever in making such concessions as might be necessary. A joint protectorate was discussed from time to time, but the Deakin Ministry in Australia strongly opposed it, as precluding the old Australian ambition to see the group under British sovereignty. There was a good deal of correspondence between the Colonial Office and the colonies, and when it was made clear that understandings with France quite prevented Britain obtaining full control, Deakin agreed reluctantly to the principle of joint control.

One of the first-fruits of the Entente Cordiale was the declaration signed at London on 8th April 1904, under which the two countries agreed to concert measures to put an end to the difficulties arising from an absence of jurisdiction over the natives, and to settle disputes regarding landed property "without modifying the *status quo*."<sup>1</sup>

The position did not so easily lend itself to adjustment. Yet another full year passed without any progress being made, and in August 1905 Deakin is impatiently writing to demand if nothing is ever to be done. The interminable postponements and uncertainties, he said, were most discouraging, and the joint protectorate would be preferable to such a state of things. The sentiment of Australia, he added, was strongly averse to anything like a sacrifice of the great imperial possibilities of the New Hebrides, and he urged therefore that any proposed settlement should be submitted to Australia and New Zealand before being concluded<sup>2</sup> (Deakin to Governor-General of Australia, 29th August 1905). New Zealand placed annexation first and a definite partition of the islands second (Governor of New Zealand to Colonial Office, 5th December 1905).<sup>3</sup> Mr Balfour had promised in the House of Commons in 1900 that no decision would be come to without consulting the dominions concerned.

Throughout 1905 the chancelleries of Great Britain and France were intermittently engaged trying to agree on the terms of reference for the proposed joint discussion. It was at first proposed to debate land titles only. Then the lack of jurisdiction over natives forced itself to the fore, and finally in September the French Government proposed that there should be a verbal discussion by officials from both sides in the hope of solving certain difficulties which had "paralysed for a long time the action of the two powers."

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1905, Cd. 2385.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1907, Cd. 3288.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

**The Convention of 1906.**—It was not until 1st February 1906 that the delegates met. They were:—

*Great Britain.*—Sir E. Gorst, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs; Mr H. Bertram Cox, Assistant Under Secretary for the Colonies; Mr C. J. B. Hurst, Legal Adviser to the Foreign Office; Mr H. E. Dale, of the Colonial Office.

*France.*—M. Saint-Germain, President of the Council of Administration of the Colonial Office; M. Picanon, Governor of New Caledonia; M. Weber, Under Secretary for the Colonies; M. Gournay, Secretary and Interpreter.

The Convention<sup>1</sup> was signed early in March for submission to the respective governments. It provided (Article I.) that the New Hebrides, with the Banks and Torres Islands, should form a "region of joint influence" where neither power should exercise a separate control, but each should have jurisdiction over its own nationals, who should be under the laws of their respective countries. Each country should appoint a high commissioner and a resident commissioner, and each resident commissioner should have control of a body of police of the same strength, sufficient to guarantee the protection of life and property. Each of the commissioners and the joint court should be established at Vila, in the island of Efate, and they should administer the following services in common: police, posts and telegraphs, public works, ports and harbours, lighthouses, public health, and finance. No fortifications should be erected or penal settlements established.

The old Joint Naval Commission remained in force for the purpose of co-operating in maintaining order. In order to prevent either of the powers from seeking to increase its influence by inflating the number of its subjects or citizens, it was provided (Article VIII.) that no native should be allowed to acquire the status of a subject of either power, or to come under its protection. The high commissioners, on the other hand, were endowed with authority over the natives, and power to make binding regulations for their government, but they were enjoined to respect their manners and customs. To the joint court each of the powers was to appoint a judge and the King of Spain the president. Very elaborate provision was made for the settlement of land disputes and for the control of the labour traffic, which is restricted to vessels under the French or British flag. The sale of arms and alcoholic liquors to natives is totally

<sup>1</sup> Convention of 20th October 1906: P.P., Cd. 3300.

prohibited. To encourage municipal government it is provided that all applications to form a municipality, by not less than thirty non-native adults, shall be granted.

**Criticisms from Australasia.**—Before confirming the new instrument, Lord Elgin had to submit it to Australia and New Zealand. This he did in a somewhat apologetic despatch (9th March 1906), with the rather irrelevant preamble that by recognising the paramount rights of Great Britain and France, the Convention "provided for the first time against the possible appearance of a third country as a claimant to political rights in the group." This contingency had surely passed into the background with the Franco-German agreement of December 1885, and out of sight altogether with the tripartite agreement of 1899. He asserted, too, that out of deference to the wishes of the Commonwealth the joint arrangement had been made as "narrow as possible," so that it might not be rendered difficult at some future date to bring the group entirely under British sovereignty. He was confident that the Convention represented a great step in advance, by substituting a civilised and orderly administration for a state of chaos, and removing the main cause of friction between the European residents. Those who were of other nationality than British or French would be permitted within six months to choose which law they would come under.<sup>1</sup>

**The Attitude of New Zealand.**—New Zealand entered an early caveat, and cited the case of Samoa to justify her distrust in joint protectorates.<sup>2</sup> Elgin replied that the Imperial Government could not entertain the idea of making concessions elsewhere to obtain the entire withdrawal of France. Nor could they, owing to the distribution of population, effect an equitable partition.

Shortly after the despatch reached the Antipodes Mr Seddon, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, paid an official visit to the Commonwealth and discussed the matter with the Federal Ministry. The outcome is seen in almost identical despatches<sup>3</sup> from Australia and New Zealand to the Colonial Office, prefaced with "a respectful but earnest protest in regard to the manner in which this important subject, in which all parties in Australasia feel the deepest concern, has been dealt with" (Deakin to Governor-General, 13th June 1906).

<sup>1</sup> P.P., Cd. 3288.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Seddon died at sea on 10th June 1906. The Memorandum from New Zealand was actually signed by his successor, the Hon. (now Sir) William Hall-Jones.



Deakin complained that not only had the Dominions not been invited to send a representative to the conference, but they did not know officially that such a conference was being held. Though it lasted a month, no information was sent to Australia until six days after it had concluded. And they were then asked for their opinion in a despatch which ended with the words: "The draft convention must be confirmed or rejected practically as it stands." He insisted that no other settlement than annexation could possibly satisfy the people of Australia.

**Australian Criticism.**—Deakin contended that unequal treatment must result from a system which put French and British settlers under different jurisdiction; and it could only be obviated by a common code of law. It was important, he thought, that the high commissioners should not be permitted to impose any religious disabilities, or to interfere with the liberty of worship. It was important that there should be provision limiting the area of land which one man might hold. It was important that the shipping of the two powers should have some protection against the discrimination of German policy in other groups.

That none of these things had been taken cognisance of by the framers was due, it was suggested, to the fact that no representatives of Australia or New Zealand had taken part in the conference.

**The Convention Ratified.**—By the time these despatches reached England the Government was already troubled about reports, which they considered well founded, "that large interests other than British or French were being created in the New Hebrides," and it was impatient on that account to proceed to the joint protectorate, leaving other details for subsequent consideration. To this France objected on the ground that such a step might be held to imply that the rights of France and Great Britain were not already recognised as paramount. Elgin was prepared to put forward some of the oversea suggestions, but he felt it was wiser to ratify the draft as it stood, lest France should raise disturbing counter-proposals. Thereupon Australia and New Zealand again conferred, and, having no alternative, they withdrew their objections and threw the entire responsibility for the Convention on the British Government.

The Convention was ratified on 20th October.

The annoyance of the Dominions was not allayed by the appearance of a despatch from the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific (Sir Everard im Thurn) dealing



with a visit paid by him to the New Hebrides between the signing and the ratifying of the Convention.<sup>1</sup> He found in the group 228 British settlers (including 25 missionaries), and 401 French (including 33 missionaries). He remarked here the phenomenon so frequently met with of missionaries exercising almost the authority of a government. The Presbyterians, he said, had been so long there, unchecked by the concurrent existence of anything representing lay government, that they to some extent felt themselves the real ruling power, and were inclined to resent not merely the authority but even the existence of the lay government. The Roman Catholics, having come at a later date, had acquired no such political interest, or had lost it. In the kidnapping days, he added, some of the missionaries actually set up police forces of their own, and one such force, acting quite independently of the civil British authority, existed quite recently in the island of Epi.<sup>2</sup>

**French Preponderance Explained.**—The High Commissioner ascribed the preponderance of French interests over British largely to the influence of the powerful French company, and to the subsidies and tariff advantages which were afforded by the neighbouring colony of New Caledonia. The British settlers had no subsidies, and their only market, that of the Commonwealth, was not only not free, but was heavily protected “precisely against the New Hebrides.”

Deakin took up the challenge with avidity. He denied that there was any protection directed against the New Hebrides. The chief product—copra—was actually admitted free, and exceptionally low freights had been arranged for the group, besides which the Commonwealth Parliament had passed a vote for assisting the British settlers. Moreover, both Australia and New Zealand had expressed the hope, when discussing the Convention, that provision would be made for reciprocal trade with the New Hebrides. The decision that exemption from customs duties could not be granted to the British settlers without contravening international agreements was given by the British Board of Trade.<sup>3</sup>

**Machinery of the Condominium.**—When the arrangements under Article X. of the Convention came to be put into force, the Solicitor-General for New Zealand was one of the delegates for Great Britain to decide upon the constitution of the joint court and its rules. In handing over the administration of British interests to the High

<sup>1</sup> P.P., Cd. 3288.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., Cd. 3525.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

Commissioner, Elgin described the arrangement as a species of "Condominium," for which there was no diplomatic precedent, since the country had no institutions of its own and no political organisation. It was merely a reinforcement of the existing British and French organisations, under which two aggregations of nationals would exist side by side, each governed by its own code of law. The subjects of third powers would be in precisely the same position as French or British subjects, according to which they elected to be under.

In appointing the Governor of New Caledonia to be High Commissioner for France, the French Minister emphasised the responsibility of the Republic towards native races. "It is not only a duty of humanity," he wrote, "it is also obviously the interests of the settlers, which necessitate that equitable treatment and real protection should be afforded to the natives. The future of the New Hebrides is, to a great extent, dependent on that of the kanaka race, and you are aware that the Government of the Republic is animated, in the administration of the French colonies, by the knowledge that the fate of colonial enterprises depends, in the first place, on the amount of prosperity assured to the native populations."<sup>1</sup>

**Conditions To-day.**—That the Condominium in its present form is far from satisfactory to either race is evident from the report of the Interstate Commission of Australia (1918). There are four distinct jurisdictions: 1. A French administration and tribunal. 2. A British administration and tribunal. 3. The mixed tribunal with its native police, its "Franco-Anglo" police, and its services in common. 4. The Joint Naval Commission entrusted with litigious matters between the natives.

The complexity of the system has evoked from both French and British residents, it is said, an endless series of complaints as to the "uncertainty of the law, the inertness of the administration, and the tardy dispensation of justice, more especially in the determination of disputed titles. . . . Complaint is made that neither French nor British colonists are receiving fair treatment at the hands of their respective governments, and that the New Hebrides question remains a menace not only to the political and material well-being of these islands, but also to the harmonious relations of the South Pacific and the Commonwealth generally."

Control under such conditions is necessarily slack. There

<sup>1</sup> P.P., Cd. 3876.

is no power to compel the natives to work, and while 70,000 of them live idle lives, plantations cannot be developed without importing labour. At present the settlers are inclined to look for this commodity to the Dutch East Indies, or to China.

**The Solomon Islands.**—Stretching northward from the New Hebrides towards the Bismarck archipelago, between 11 deg. S. and 4 deg. S. is a fertile and thickly populated tropical group, climatically favoured as compared with the New Hebrides in being outside the area of the hurricanes. Discovered by Mendana in 1567, they were settled by Catholic and Protestant missionaries in the middle of the nineteenth century, and are now a strong centre of the Melanesian Mission. There are many British traders, the white population in 1912 numbering 438.

Most of the Solomons were placed under British protection in 1893. Four years later the protectorate was extended to Rennell, Bellona, and Sikiana (Stewart Islands), and the Marists were then about to establish themselves on Guadalcanar.<sup>1</sup> In the following year the Santa Cruz group was added, so that the protectorate extended from Treasury Island to Mitre Island, W.N.W. to E.S.E., a distance of 900 miles.<sup>2</sup>

The Anglo-German Agreement of 1899 gave to Great Britain the large islands of Choiseul and Ysabel, which had been allotted to Germany by the demarcation of 1886.

A powerful British company under the presidency of Lord Stanmore (formerly Sir Arthur Gordon) applied in 1898 for a grant of the whole of the unoccupied lands in the islands of Kulambangra, Gizo, and Narovo Lnoo, and the north-east coast of New Georgia, with the object of producing copra, pearl, shell, and india-rubber. The company proposed to administer the islands, and to repress at its own expense the raids of Solomon islanders on the neighbouring German islands. It anticipated that at the termination of its lease of ten years a federated Australia would wish to take control (Stanmore to Colonial Office, 17th April 1899).

Chamberlain declined to entertain such an ambitious scheme, but eventually, in 1903, a certificate was issued leasing 193,490 acres for a period of ninety-nine years.

The British Resident Commissioner for the Solomons resides at Tulagi, and there are several magistrates

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1899, Cd. 9046.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1898, Cd. 9498.

throughout the group. Following are significant financial figures:—

	1911-2.	1912-3.
Revenue . . . .	£16,040	£15,432
Expenditure . . . .	22,639	15,571
Imports . . . .	130,019	131,761
Exports . . . .	89,234	109,921

**Wallis Island Colony.**—The small island of Wallis, or Uea, about 250 miles west of Samoa, has no political significance. At one time it seemed likely to be of great importance, for it was here that in 1837 the French missionaries, forbidden admission to some of the more important groups, formed their base and seminary for the Western Pacific.

Though not actually in French possession until 1887, it was practically French from the first owing to the exclusive existence of the French missionaries. The population now is stated to amount to 4500. On first becoming a French possession Wallis was administered from New Caledonia. In September 1917 the French Parliament declared Wallis and Horne islands a French colony.

## CHAPTER XXI

### A REVIEW OF POLICY

**Motives of Policy.**—The origins of British policy in the Pacific trace back to the pioneering discoveries of Captain Cook, and the scientific rivalries of the French and British navigators in the following decades. The only political motive evident before the French Revolution was the necessity for disposing of the criminal classes of Great Britain for the safety—it was supposed—of the non-criminal. From this motive sprang the establishment of the only colony which England created willingly and of set purpose in the Pacific. New South Wales was designed and founded by the British Government in 1788, with no *arrière pensée*, with no ambitions for future dominion.

From that time onward each step towards ordered settlements of British people in the Pacific, each later step towards free development and self-government, was stoutly opposed by the official classes. There was no desire anywhere for colonies better than penal settlements. Every step of political expansion in the Pacific, until the last decade or two of the nineteenth century, was a grudging counter-stroke, jealous of French progress. It was thus that Governor King in 1798 sent Lieutenant Robbins in the *Cumberland* to follow up the ships of M. Baudin and assert British rights in Tasmania—rights dormant and comfortably forgotten until this menace approached them.<sup>1</sup> It was thus that Swan River was occupied in 1829 on receipt of a polite intimation of the intention of the French to form a settlement there.<sup>2</sup> It was thus, on the rumoured formation of a New Zealand company in France, that the British Government, having fought against all representations for fifteen years, suddenly in 1839 despatched a lieutenant-governor with a dormant commission. And it was the immediate

<sup>1</sup> *Logbooks of the "Lady Nelson,"* by Ida Lee.

<sup>2</sup> *The Genesis of Queensland,* by Henry S. Russell.



menace of French action on the spot that caused Hobson to make the occupation of the South Island definitive almost under the guns of a French corvette.

**The Impulse for Freedom.**—The Revolution in France gave a great impetus to missionary enthusiasm in England, and to that impulse for freedom which showed itself, not so very many years later, in the demand for the emancipation of slaves. England's own activity in the Pacific was primarily scientific. Thereafter, in the first half of the nineteenth century, it was a combination of philanthropy with the spread of Christianity. In the second part of the century it was a police activity pure and simple. The old antagonism to the colonising spirit gradually reacted. While the Colonial Office stoutly resisted the assumption of new responsibilities, it tended more and more to throw the existing colonies entirely on their own resources, and thus conferred on the outer empire the most important of all its benefits.

The revival of France after the Revolution—about the third decade of the century—introduced for the first time a political element of rivalry, but did not overcome the old motives of British policy. The earliest clashes of interests with the French in the Pacific were generally in respect to the religious freedom of missionaries. The obstacles which the Wakefield school of colonisers encountered had their origin, also, in the missionary influences which were so long paramount at the Colonial Office. Actuated always by regard for the welfare of the natives, the Colonial Office felt that any intrusion of whites into the savage islands of the Pacific, unless they were missionaries carrying the blessings of religion, tended to the injury of the natives. Consequently the constructive schemes of the colonisers were invariably met by a relentless policy of negation.

The foremost place given to the welfare of the natives is a motive beyond criticism, and one from which the British Empire has reaped nothing but honour. But it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Colonial Office of the day carried the principle to an absurdity. It was impossible to stop the clock of progress, and to prevent whites from going to live and trade and work amongst the heathen communities of the South Seas. The Wakefield school was scarcely less concerned for the welfare of the natives than the Colonial Office itself. Yet by its traditional policy of reluctance—now discountenancing a colonising company that should have been encouraged—again and again declining to assume

the sovereignty of races honestly desiring to be British subjects—the Colonial Office brought it about more than once that after much trouble and bloodshed and anguish, the natives were handed over to the authority of nations which have dealt with them much less humanely and successfully than the British would have done.

The history of the Colonial Office in the nineteenth century is, in fact, that of a failure to recognise the colonising capacity and the irrepressible oversea enterprise of the British people.

**A Dash of Vigour.**—With the advent of Lord John Russell at the Colonial Office (1839-41) there was a momentary change. In his all too short tenure of the office, British policy was more virile and positive than at any previous period. Which of all the earlier—or all the later—secretaries of state would have answered so blithely "The whole of it," when the French diplomat asked how much of Australia England laid claim to?

Russell had no patience with the *laissez-faire* character of the policy which had such a fortress in the missionary and anti-slavery interests. He could see the destiny of England in taking hold of the problems of the uncivilised world, instead of standing by and ordering the world to keep its hands off for fear of making things worse than they were. He insisted on England asserting herself in the colonial sphere. And it was an opportune time to do so. Under the ægis of Louis Philippe (1830-48) the naval commanders and missionaries of France were restless and often overbearing neighbours; and one can suppose quite a different outcome of the incidents of this decade in the Pacific if Russell had come to the Colonial Office a few years sooner, and remained there a few years longer.

Lord John Russell's policy at the Colonial Office is well summed up in his own words:—

"If Great Britain gives up her supremacy from a niggardly spirit of parsimony, or from a craven fear of helplessness, other powers will soon look upon the Empire, not with the regard due to an equal, as she once was, but with jealousy of the height she once held, without the fear she once inspired. To build up an empire extending over every sea, swaying many diverse races, and combining many forms of religion, requires courage and capacity: to allow such an empire to fall to pieces is a task which may be performed by the poor in intellect and the pusillanimous in conduct."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lord John Russell*, by Stuart J. Reid, p. 116.

**The French Navigators.**—In a space of less than forty years the London Missionary Society had not only civilised and Christianised the Society Islands, to the immense benefit of their inhabitants, but had brought them under a form of government based on the English model. They were in fact an English colony or centre, and a shining example of the successful enterprise of English missionaries. The missionaries were candidly not anxious to see the British flag hoisted, for the very human reason that their own temporal power must necessarily be curtailed thereby.

The activity of the French scientific navigators in the Pacific, already very marked, was of course a Catholic influence. When it came under the fostering protection of a strongly Catholic sovereign, the ambitious Louis Philippe, the French corvettes in the Pacific became active colonisers and spreaders of French influence, aiding and assisting French interests and French missions wherever they found them. The Holy See participated in the enthusiasm for the conquest of the islands, and in June 1833 Pope Leo XII. confided to the Parisian Society of Picpus the task of bringing the natives of these myriad islands into the Church. With his handful of priests and catechists, the Apostolic Prefect landed humbly in the Gambier Islands, there to form the base and seminary from which to conquer the islands for Christianity. A few years later we find his priests radiating to all the other groups, whether already occupied or not.

The direct result was a series of conflicts and persecutions. The French ships openly championed the French missions. In Tahiti, in Hawaii, and elsewhere, they intervened brusquely and triumphantly, and generally British policy was exhibited in a weak and abashed light. Russell had left the Colonial Office, and the poor in intellect and the pusillanimous in conduct seemed ready to allow the Empire to fall to pieces. It would be difficult to-day to find any tolerance in the Empire for the flabby attitude which, at point after point, surrendered British interests and the guardianship of British centres of culture to the noisy demands of the French frigate captains. To avoid friction at any cost seemed to be the aim. England was to be the high-minded philanthropist watching after the welfare of the natives, the policeman curbing the British foreloper and adventurer. But under no conditions should she assume responsibility.

These events were happening chiefly in the Eastern Pacific. It is refreshing to find within the next few years, at the other extremity of the wide ocean, an official of the

Government boldly enunciating the doctrine of Monroeism for Australasia.

**Sir George Grey's Scheme.**—The celebrated Pacific scheme of Sir George Grey, Governor of New Zealand, had its origin, apparently, in a letter from Mr Walter Lawry, the general superintendent of National Missions, dated 22nd December 1847. Lawry, who had just spent six months in the islands, brought back with him from the chiefs of Fiji and Tonga a cordial invitation to Grey to visit them, "because they have fixed their hearts on being the friends and allies of England." Thakombau Mr Lawry described as "a fine savage about to embrace Christianity, and very desirous of being under Your Excellency's wing and in alliance with England." Tonga, for its part, repeated the request it had made for British protection in February 1844, a request which seems to have been lost in the Foreign Office, for it was never replied to.<sup>1</sup>

Grey was enthusiastic over the prospect of an extended empire in the Pacific. He wrote to Earl Grey<sup>2</sup> that he was satisfied that the desire for annexation in Fiji and Tonga was a genuine one on the part of both Europeans and natives. It had arisen partly from the fact that many respectable whites settled there looked forward to the arrival of British sovereignty to give them security in their holdings as against the possibility of French aggression; and partly from the influence upon the natives of many native New Zealanders living amongst them who had informed them of the happy condition of their country under British rule. Grey did not feel justified in accepting the offers on his own responsibility, but he strongly favoured fostering the feelings of goodwill which the natives had evinced. In Tonga perhaps one-third of the population was Roman Catholic, but it was not likely to be hostile. On the whole the Tongans seemed the finest branch of the Polynesian race and pre-eminently capable of improvement. Fiji contained a population estimated at 300,000, and Tonga about 20,000.

**A Self-supporting Empire.**—Grey's enthusiasm looked very far ahead, and evidently scared the Colonial Office. He scouted the idea that the proposed new colonies would be any burden to the Empire. On the contrary, such was the warlike character of their people and of those of New Zealand, that "they would be able to afford valuable and powerful assistance in time of need for the protection of

<sup>1</sup> P.R.O., C.O. 209, vol. lix.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 14th March 1848.



our neighbouring Australian settlements. At the present moment, also, this Government (New Zealand) could in the event of any war with France immediately raise a force which could without difficulty take and hold the French possessions in these seas. In the same manner I think that any extension of our possessions in these seas would not be a source of weakness but of strength, if such possession was assumed with the consent of the inhabitants of the territory occupied, and if their goodwill was retained, which it easily might be. The islands of the Pacific would all soon afford a sufficient revenue for their own government, and a sufficient force not only for their own protection but for aggression against any other power, should a necessity for such movements ever unfortunately arise.”<sup>1</sup>

He warned his chief that if England did not act the same possibilities were open to be seized by France. The altered state of British relations with France in the Pacific rendered the question a very different one from that which had arisen in Hawaii a few years earlier.

Notwithstanding his great respect for the opinion of his namesake in New Zealand, Earl Grey “recoiled from the idea of the establishment of a new empire in the Pacific.” Even if there were no other reason, the expense would be a sufficient objection. Palmerston suggested that officers might visit the islands and make treaties with the native chiefs, which would be in the nature of protectorates. They should give the chiefs all the advice they could as to their own government, and should stipulate that in the event of their getting into trouble with foreign powers they should engage to address themselves to the Queen of England, and to leave it to her to determine what steps they should take. Earl Grey was chary of accepting even this measure of responsibility, and preferred merely to proffer advice and recommendations to the chiefs “without introducing an express condition into the treaties.”

**Tonga and Fiji Rejected.**—After further discussion he informed the governor that the submission of Fiji and Tonga to British sovereignty could not be accepted at present, “since, independently of other reasons, it is to be apprehended, notwithstanding your arguments as to the ultimate economy of the measure, that the expense which such an extension of the Empire would occasion would be larger than His Majesty’s advisers would think themselves justified in proposing to Parliament. The offers must there-

<sup>1</sup> P.R.O., C.O. 209, vol. lix.



fore be declined, but in a manner as conciliatory as possible, accompanied by the expression of Her Majesty's desire to promote, as far as may be in her power, the welfare of the inhabitants of those islands, although she is unable to accept their proffered allegiance." He was, however, considering the appointment of consuls in the Pacific, whose duty it should be to advise and instruct the native authorities "towards the establishment of a regular government, to protect British subjects, and to conclude treaties with such chiefs or powers as they might consider of sufficient importance. The chiefs should also contract, in return for the aid offered them, not intentionally or willingly to do wrong to the subjects of any foreign power," and if involved in disputes with foreign powers they should, as Palmerston had suggested, address themselves to the Queen.

The consuls were in time appointed, but it was many years before Great Britain consented to assume sovereign authority anywhere.

Later Sir George Grey visited with Bishop Selwyn the vast archipelagos of the Western Pacific. He came back filled with enthusiasm for the great trust which seemed to lie at England's door, and propounded his scheme of a Pacific dominion under England's sway. All foreign settlement was to be excluded from this region—the region of so much subsequent dispute and bitterness—and the island peoples, civilised by English missionaries and taught by English teachers, were to learn to govern themselves under the auspices of a beneficent empire. When he arrived at New Caledonia Grey found that France had entered into tentative possession of the island. This did not at all accord with his scheme, and he at once lodged a protest with the French commander, which secured sufficient respite, at any rate, for the matter to be discussed between London and Paris.<sup>1</sup>

When France forced her protectorate on Protestant Tahiti as the outcome of a sectarian dispute: when she browbeat Hawaii, England merely protested, and wrung from her the historic Declaration of 1847. This was a purely negative undertaking, binding both sides not to take action against the independence of other groups. It amply satisfied the reluctant Imperialism of the day, and formed the model of a series of compacts which in the next half century were to cause unbounded indignation and impatience in the British colonies of Australia and New Zealand. Nor did

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Times of Sir George Grey*, by W. L. Rees and L. Rees.

the Declaration prevent France from doing in the Western Pacific the sort of thing she had done in the Eastern.

The transportation of criminals, for which alone the continent of Australia had been taken possession of by England, had been condemned by the colonists and stopped at their urgent request; but this was not so much an accepted part of British policy as to prompt a protest against the commencement of the same system in the same region by France. The aims of France were not merely penal. She had regained all her old confidence as a rival of England, and in her seizure of posts in the Pacific she had an eye always to strategic purposes.

**Colonial Self-reliance.**—In spite of the peril thus set up against the outlying portions of the Empire, the movement in Parliament for the reduction of oversea garrisons and the removal of responsibility for defence to the shoulders of the colonies themselves gained ground steadily. The impatience of the British Parliament was not due to reluctance to defend British interests against direct aggression. It was chiefly the outcome of the long and costly wars against the natives in New Zealand and South Africa. These campaigns reacted on colonial policy in two ways. They fostered the demand for local responsibility for defence, and at the same time intensified the hesitation of the Colonial Office to assume the sovereignty of other islands with native populations.

A departmental committee of three first considered the question of Empire defence, and of the two who signed the majority report one was John Robert Godley, a founder of the Canterbury settlement in New Zealand. Their report condemned the system of colonial garrisons for two main reasons. The first was the world-wide dispersion of forces paid for entirely by the Mother Country. The second and more important was the tendency of the system to prevent the development of a proper spirit of self-reliance amongst the colonists, and thus to enfeeble their national character.

"By the gift of self-government," the two commissioners wrote, "we have bestowed on our colonists a most important element of national education; but the habit of self-defence constitutes a part hardly less important to the training of a free people, and it will never be acquired by our colonists if we assume exclusively the task of defending them. . . . It must be borne in mind that the interests of the colonists in repelling aggression upon them is primary and direct: that of Great Britain indirect and secondary."

The report recommended the withdrawal of the oversea

detachments, a policy which was followed out gradually during the succeeding decade with little friction, except in the case of New Zealand.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence taken by the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the same subject shows clearly that the real factor in the Pacific at that time (1860) was the power of France. Rear-Admiral Erskine said that the only possible danger to Australia was from the French establishment at New Caledonia. France, he thought, would have nothing to gain by occupying Sydney, and would probably content herself by using Noumea as a base and cutting off the clippers conveying gold from Australia to England. The French garrison at Noumea at the time seemed to be limited to a few hundred men.<sup>2</sup>

There is no need to pursue this subject further than to point out that precisely the same principle was raised later by Carnarvon and Derby in regard to colonial demands for annexation. In 1870 the relations between England and her Australian colonies were as cool as possible, and the *laissez-faire* spirit at its height. A large section of the British Parliament was heartily impatient of colonial responsibility, and was glad to feel that, as regards defence at any rate, the British taxpayer was likely to be somewhat relieved.

**Policing the Ocean.**—All dreams of expansion being thus comfortably thrust aside, and the menace of France having been tragically extinguished for the time by the result of the Franco-Prussian War, England was again drawn into the vortex of Pacific activity by an influence which she could not ignore. A new development only remotely connected with the colonies compelled her to increase her interest and her power in the Pacific Ocean.

The new demand for labour caused by the development of planting in Queensland and Fiji had its immediate effect in a traffic very little removed in character from the old West African slavery, and much more difficult to cope with from the geographical conditions. For the most part the traffic was carried on in remote and scattered islands where there was no civilised jurisdiction; by captains of no nationality; in vessels which changed their flag between dusk and dawn. To suppress it was a task of surpassing

<sup>1</sup> Prof. H. E. Egerton, in his *Short History of British Colonial Policy*, gives the best reasoned account of this important episode in colonial government.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1861, No. 423.

difficulty. Yet by the tradition of the British Navy the duty fell to it, as years ago the duty of suppressing the Barbary pirates and the African slave-traders had fallen to it; and, having entered on the task, it could not withdraw. It did not even demand the co-operation of other powers. One step led to another. Where jurisdiction did not exist it had to be created. Fiji had to be annexed, else would the beaches of Suva and Levuka have become the Alsatia of lawlessness and crime that some had feared.

For about ten years the British Government struggled honestly and energetically to stamp out the evil without extending its own sovereignty. There was a tendency now and again to lay at the door of the Australian colonies all the responsibility for the dreadful traffic. Queensland certainly gave reason occasionally for the suspicion that she was not whole-hearted in trying to suppress abuses, but the charge as against Australia generally was no more just than to lay the Barbary piracies at the door of Spain or Italy. The extension of British rule was the essential condition precedent to the extinction of the trade. The colonies had demanded its extension over and over again. For the rest, they passed severe restrictive laws, but they had neither the prerogative nor the means of maintaining a navy or police.

Britain was put to strange expedients to avoid extending her sovereignty in those days. British consuls were gaolers without gaols, and judges without sheriffs, so that miscreants caught red-handed and apprehended for trial sailed off scot-free in their schooners, or shed their nationality and their responsibility in one all-embracing act.

New South Wales had less to do with the kanakas than Queensland, and, probably on that account, was chosen by the British Government as the medium for all communications regarding the traffic. Yet the Foreign Minister protested in 1870 that New South Wales had no special authority in regard to the islands.

The extension of British authority was obviously demanded by circumstances, but again the old question of colonial responsibility cropped up.

**The Colonies and Annexation.**—When Carnarvon was faced in 1874 by requests from Australia for the annexation of Fiji—a step rendered imperative for the suppression of the kanaka traffic—he was determined to fight to a finish the principle that the colonies should bear the cost of any annexations they asked for. In order to test the question, he



suggested to New South Wales and New Zealand, who had specifically requested the annexation, and to Queensland and Victoria, which were equally interested in island affairs, that they should contribute together the sum of £4000 a year necessary for the administration. This seemed more convenient than actually administering the colony, as New Zealand and New South Wales had offered to do, and more likely to place all on an equal footing.

There was nothing equivocal about the replies. New South Wales would have none of it, but was quite prepared to share with the Mother Country any deficit in the administration. Queensland, having no trading relations with Fiji, was not interested as she was in New Guinea. New Zealand, the pioneer of expansion, would not hear of contributing to the cost of the new colony, unless she had a proportionate share in its control. Victoria feared that a preference might be shown to some other colony in trading relations with Fiji.

**A Suggestion towards Administration.**—Carnarvon was not at all satisfied with the result of his appeal. He was wedded to the self-reliant policy, and when a few months later requests came to hand for the annexation of the whole of non-Dutch New Guinea, the New Hebrides, and all the islands south of the equator, he put forward again the suggestion that the colonies should hold themselves jointly responsible for the cost. In fact, he was determined to withhold what they wanted until they accepted his conditions. "It would be impossible," he said, "for a very large proportion of the taxpayers of (Great Britain) to understand on what principle they should bear, whilst the colonies immediately concerned should be exempted from, the burden of any expenditure that may be incurred" (Circular despatch, 9th July 1875).<sup>1</sup>

Most of the colonies adhered to their previous attitude. Queensland could not see that the admission of a principle could alter the case, since each instance would have to be decided on its merits. New South Wales, like New Zealand, objected to contributing, not from indisposition to provide the money, but solely on account of the "apparent impossibility of having any share in the control commensurate with the amount subscribed, and the natural indisposition of the representatives of these people to grant money for a purpose over which they cannot have any such control." Victoria thought the annexation an Imperial matter.

**The Vogel Memorandum.**—It was New Zealand again

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1876, C. 1566.



that provided to the controversy a constructive and reasoned memorandum (5th April 1876). Vogel was again the composer, but he had the approval of his cabinet. He deplored the fact that the colonies were beginning to feel that the Motherland was drifting into a new colonial, or "anti-colonial," policy. The act of asking contributions from the colonies for the extension of the Empire seemed to him "a novel proceeding, connected only with the presumed policy of casting the colonies adrift; and to acquiesce in it would argue the acceptance by the colonies of the new position it was desired to assign to them." Moreover, there was an insurmountable anomaly in contributing to the cost of a government in which no control was to be permitted to the contributors. Vogel was glad to believe that the policy of "disintegrating the Empire was being less actively pursued," but it could not be supposed, he added, that the soreness which had grown up in the colonies for some years, under the conception of such treatment, would die away in a single day.<sup>1</sup>

So the question was not at all advanced. Carnarvon's successor, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, took up precisely the same attitude. He wrote to the High Commissioner (5th October 1878):<sup>2</sup>—

"The principle that the Australasian colonies must bear the cost of an enterprise in which this country is not directly concerned, except in so far as it is of interest and importance to those colonies, should be upheld as long and completely as possible."

**The Veto on Adventure.**—But it fell to Gordon himself to express in all its baldness the Colonial Office policy of absolute negation. In doing so he echoed faithfully enough the purely police character of the High Commission, but his caveat against adventure evoked a storm of protest from the colonies and colonial circles in England. It was an official veto on the old enterprise of the British race. In 1878 a Victorian company, the Australasian Colonisation Company, applied for a royal charter to colonise the north-eastern coast of New Guinea, and in the event of being unable to find a suitable site, it proposed to apply to the King of the Netherlands for permission to settle in Dutch territory. Sir Arthur Gordon caused a written reply to be sent, stating:—

"It is his duty formally and emphatically to declare that the

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1876, C. 1566.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., C. 3617.

British Government disclaim all obligation to protect or interfere on behalf of persons voluntarily placing themselves in positions of danger in a savage country without the approval or consent of Imperial authority, and that those who enter on such enterprises do so at their own risk and peril."

Gordon would hardly have made such a downright pronouncement if he had not been fully cognisant of the Government's determination to pursue such a policy. Hicks-Beach entirely approved his action, and five years later we find Derby proclaiming exactly the same principle to an English company of venturers, the New Guinea Trading Corporation. In this case he objected to the intention of the promoters to engage in the purchase of land from the natives. And about the same time Derby made his immortal statement that the Queen had already black subjects enough.

**The Native Autonomy Fiction.**—And so the years passed. In spite of its limitations the High Commission, in co-operation with the naval commanders and the colonial governments, achieved considerable success in combating the evils of the kanaka traffic. For some years, so well did things go, that the Government was able to flatter itself it would not require to undertake further liabilities. The Colonial Office nursed fondly the fiction that the native races of the Pacific were really sovereign states, capable of looking after their own affairs and of saying what was good for themselves. Tahiti and Hawaii, now almost historical, were founded on an aristocratic native society, and both received valuable assistance and advice from the missionaries and foreign residents. The system of society in the Western Pacific afforded no basis at all for such experiments. The missionaries had not been able to graft civilised institutions and a settled polity on the crude village society of the Melanesians: and nobody who understood the natives was under any misapprehension as to their future.

As long ago as 1883 Thurston expressed his firm conviction that the natives of Polynesia were incapable of forming or maintaining any form of government worthy of the name, and that any attempt to do so would only afford opportunities for entanglements with foreign powers and "the intrigues of private speculators and low-class adventurers"<sup>1</sup> (Thurston to Des Voeux, 1st December 1883). Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, and Hawaii all gave this statement point; and Melanesia was only less hopeful than Polynesia.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 3839.

But Downing Street clung fondly to its illusion, and more than once met a colonial demand for annexation with the answer that the natives had shown no desire to give up their "independence" or their "sovereignty." In the case of Fiji, the "kingship" itself was a pure assumption by officials of the Colonial Office and the Navy. The chief of Bau became King of Fiji, over the heads of his equals and contemporaries, by a stroke of the official pen.

**Entry of the German Companies.**—Before the old menace of France had been laid, a new and more insidious menace took root in the Pacific, in the incipient undertakings of the German trading companies. The Australian colonies were the first to take alarm at the wide interests which sprang from the beginnings of Godeffroy & Sons, and the old demand for annexations blazed up again. The dispute about contributions was not settled; but the colonies approached the question in a serious mood, and clamoured for action to prevent a recurrence of incidents like those of Tahiti in the previous generation and Samoa at the moment.

Acting under fears, the sincerity of which was frankly questioned by Derby and Granville, Queensland on her own initiative hoisted the flag in New Guinea. Subsequent events show that in their treatment of this incident both Derby and Granville failed to appreciate the real dangers of the position. Derby seemed too anxious to compel the colonies to accept the conditions laid down by Carnarvon and himself; and when he did realise the danger it was too late.

The Agents-General supported the Queensland annexation by a noteworthy memorandum (July 1883), emphasising the importance of seizing at once positions which might be of value in view of the opening of the Panama Canal. France had already secured herself in the possession of Tahiti, and the United States of the splendid harbour of Pagopago, in Samoa. They warned Derby to take heed of the changing attitude of Germany, as disclosed in recent events at Samoa and elsewhere, and to yield to the impelling power "not of desires but of events." They vigorously repudiated the doctrine of non-responsibility for the protection of British traders and settlers beyond civilised jurisdiction, and added:—

"It is certainly not by colonists who have founded communities on this side of the world, whose trade already exceeds in volume the whole of the foreign trade of England at the accession of Queen Victoria, that this doctrine will ever be acquiesced in. It

was by voluntarily placing themselves in danger that English adventurers built up our Indian and Colonial Empire. It surely can never be contended that an elaborate scheme of government was to be founded, whose sole object should be to punish a subject of the Queen for any wrong he might commit, while it denied him redress for any wrong he might suffer."

Almost at the same moment Derby received a despatch from the Governor of New Zealand (Jervois), expressing his conviction not only that the colonies were well able to undertake the management of the islands, but that the responsibility would be good for them, as tending to encourage the feeling in favour of federation, "of which intercolonial free trade would be an incident, and make them realise more fully the necessity for providing for their own defence" (Jervois to Derby, 16th June 1883).

**Derby's Rebuff to the Colonies.**—Nevertheless, at the end of August, in spite of the accumulated evidence of the unanimity and earnestness of the colonies, Derby informed them that he was not now prepared to receive contributions from them. A couple of days later, in his reply to the Agents-General, he refused point-blank to ratify the annexation. In Samoa, he said, no power had shown any desire to obtain a paramount influence, and it therefore remained an "independent state recognised as such by European diplomacy, and in these circumstances the question might possibly arise whether its annexation by any power would not be a violation of international law." The same argument applied to Tonga, and the New Hebrides were the subject of an understanding with France. So that, on the whole, the claims and interests of other powers constituted a very serious impediment to the complete jurisdiction by the High Commissioner which had been claimed. The most frequented of the groups had already "such relations with foreign powers, in common with England, as could not be summarily ignored." As regards New Britain and the Solomons, the British Government had no evidence that the governments of the Australasian colonies had sufficiently considered the extent of the responsibilities attaching to annexation, and was far from being satisfied that the assumption of those responsibilities was necessary or advisable. Finally the colonies were adjured to consult together, and "make those united representations which have been invited, furnishing also an effective guarantee for such expenditure as may be incurred. They will, no doubt, at the same time consider whether they



wish to make jointly any similar definite proposal with regard to other islands not already connected by treaty or otherwise with foreign powers."

**An Impetus to Federation.**—It was very much the sort of letter a tradesman might write to a prospective customer of doubtful solvency. Empire relations have travelled far since those days. It is quite inconceivable that a Secretary of State could hold office to-day after addressing self-governing colonies in such terms. But it was the deplorable temper of the time; and it had deplorable results, from which the Empire recovered but slowly.

Still, it did make clear to Australians what Derby wished to make clear, namely, that he had no intention of meeting their wishes, and that he hoped in future that he would be called on to confer with a united Australia rather than with a number of independent states. Within four months the colonies had met in convention, and laid the foundations of the future Commonwealth of Australia. Their promptitude was the best possible evidence, if evidence were necessary, that they were in earnest, and honestly believed themselves face to face with danger. The Convention of December 1883 urgently begged reconsideration of the annexation proposals, and pledged the colonies individually to defray such share of the cost incurred in giving effect to their wishes as the Imperial Government should deem fair and reasonable, "having regard to the relative importance of Imperial and Australasian interests."<sup>1</sup>

At the Convention all the colonies were represented, including even Western Australia, which was still under Crown colony government. Nor were the Australian colonies unwilling to regard Fiji as a prospective unit of the future federation. When invited to attend in his dual capacity of Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, Des Voeux's first impulse was to decline, as he had reason to believe that the Imperial Government did not contemplate the early inclusion of Fiji in the Australian federation. Fortunately he changed his mind, and his presence was most helpful and instructive. Incidentally the Convention received a petition from the whites in Fiji asking for amelioration of their condition by federation with Australia. They urged that it was altogether opposed to the spirit of the age that they should be denied any voice in the appropriation of their expenditure.

Considering his position, Des Voeux took a very bold

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1884, C. 3863.



attitude in his constructive memorandum on the future of the Pacific.<sup>1</sup>

"In view of the not unnatural reluctance of the Imperial Government to undertake additional responsibility, I have gradually formed the opinion that control on the part of the confederated colonies over these islands affords the only reasonable prospect of material and moral advantage to them."

The object of his memorandum, he told Derby, was to convince the Convention that further colonisation of the tropical islands was undesirable in the interests of Australasia, and should be excluded from any project of annexation.

In view of the conference, Victoria had inquired of the Colonial Office on what terms annexation would be agreed to; but Derby refused to commit himself. All he would say was that if the colonies came to a decision either to federate or on the particular point at issue, there would be much less difficulty in "arranging for the transfer to them of the obligations of this country in respect of neighbouring native communities," but it was not possible to say whether annexation would even then be agreed to (Colonial Office to Agent-General for Victoria, 22nd October 1883). Meanwhile Sir Anthony Musgrave, who had just come to assume the governorship of Queensland, and might be supposed to know the mind of the Secretary of State, gave it as his opinion, in opening Parliament on 9th November, "that a firm and united expression of opinion would lead to the annexation being carried out."

**Derby's Great Blunder.**—Judged fairly, the events of 1883 must be held to prove conclusively the sincerity of Australian anxieties. The colonies had, moreover, backed up their opinion by guaranteeing the expenses of the policy they were contending for. It is seriously open to question, therefore, whether Derby was justified in any further delay after receiving the reports of the Convention. His own governors in all the colonies had assured him of the reality of the menace, and even New South Wales, the least intrepid of all, had been converted to the view of Victoria by the obvious likelihood that the attention of other countries must by now have been attracted to these fallow and tempting fields by the mere warmth and length of the controversy.

Derby, it is to be feared, was no longer in the right

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum on the Future of New Guinea and Polynesia*, 7th November 1883: P.P., C. 3863.

temper to judge the question dispassionately, and Granville never did grasp the position until it was too late.

What had occurred at Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, and New Britain was conclusive proof that Germany already had a Pacific policy, and that her protestations of disinterestedness were not to be taken too seriously. When Bismarck demanded a rehearing of the Fiji land claims he was actuated more than anything else by annoyance at the idea that Great Britain's policy was being dictated by the wishes of her colonies in the Pacific. In June 1884, six months after the Convention, Ampthill warned Granville in the plainest terms that Bismarck was being driven, "contrary to his convictions and his will, into the inauguration of the colonial policy he had hitherto denounced as detrimental to the concentration of German strength and power" (Ampthill to Granville, 28th June 1884).<sup>1</sup> The company to which in 1883 Bismarck had ostensibly refused protection, now came to light as the pretext for the extension of German sovereignty. Derby had spent a whole year of valuable time haggling with the colonies over the financial guarantee, and even when it was forthcoming he had delayed to act on it.

**Granville's Responsibility.**—The story of the New Guinea incidents is not a satisfactory one, and it is not surprising that it should still be quoted in Australia and New Zealand as proof of the disregard of Downing Street for the opinions and interests of the oversea Dominions. Derby made a mistake in disallowing the Queensland annexation, but a much greater in delaying his own action so long after he had taught the colonies the lesson in manners on which he was so bent. But he was evidently sincere in the belief that no foreign intervention was to be feared.

This blunder seems to have been due to the unaccountable failure of Granville to inform Derby of what he knew about Bismarck's change of policy. Did Granville himself realise what it meant? The only faults of his administration, the Duke of Argyll told him three years later, were that "he had not taken alarm in time or replied in time to certain despatches." But in extenuation he thought it not surprising that anyone should have been "unsuspecting of the strength of the colonial mania which took possession of Bismarck so unexpectedly."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Granville*, by Lord E. Fitzmaurice, vol. ii., p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 480.

For Granville it must be said that (according to Meade) he was the only English, or indeed continental, statesman who really stood up successfully to Bismarck "at a time when relations were strained, not to say bitter." The New Guinea negotiations do not convey exactly this impression, but possibly it was so, for Morley records that Granville could not be taken into the new government in January 1886 owing to the German Chancellor's objection to him. "Bismarck hates Granville and would begin to make trouble for us as before."<sup>1</sup>

In his intimate recollections of the Chancellor, Busch traces this antipathy as far back as the Franco-Prussian War, when Granville was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Bismarck was much annoyed at the action of England in furnishing coal and munitions to France, and in July 1870 he ordered Busch to inspire comment in the German press on the following theme:—

"In Germany the feeling is becoming more and more widespread that under Lord Granville England, while nominally maintaining neutrality, favours France in the manner in which it is really observed."

Wherever the responsibility may lie, the fact remains that the British Government, having made an egregious blunder in spurning the advice of the colonies, was then guilty of something worse than discourtesy in coming to an arrangement with Germany without even consulting the colonies. For six months Derby was assuring them that their views would receive consideration, when apparently an undertaking had already been given to Germany that was directly contrary to the Australian demands. Is it possible that Derby was aware of what had passed between Granville and Munster?

**The Breach with the Colonies.**—When Derby's eyes were at last opened, in the autumn of 1884, he certainly made every effort to repair the damage. It was sufficiently embarrassing to have to confess that the fears of the colonies after all were well grounded. But the real reason for colonial irritation came six months later, when it transpired that Granville, in almost his first interview with Count Munster, had given an undertaking to Germany which made it impossible thereafter to do what the colonies asked. Australia wanted the whole of non-Dutch New Guinea

<sup>1</sup> Morley's *Recollections*, vol. i., p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> *Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of His History*, by Dr Moritz Busch.

protected against foreign annexation. Granville had told Germany that she might establish herself on the north coast. Such was the extraordinary want of frankness between the British Government and the colonies at this period, that this vital understanding was apparently withheld from the colonies for six months.

When the correspondence was published, it appeared that Great Britain never intended from the first German utterance on the subject to meet the wishes of the colonies. Yet no straightforward statement was made, and the colonies were not even taken into the confidence of the British Government when Gladstone exerted his influence early in 1885 to get "these small colonial difficulties out of the way" in the interests of a settlement elsewhere (*i.e.*, Egypt). Whatever the difficulties of the Imperial Government were, it is impossible to deny that the colonies had a real grievance. No incident of the seventies so well merited censure for shabbiness and discourtesy. It was impolitic in the extreme, and finally destroyed the confidence of the Australians and New Zealanders in the Colonial Office as then constituted.

In June Derby left the Colonial Office, and it fell to Colonel Stanley to endeavour to restore relations of trust and goodwill. He addressed himself to the task in a more genial spirit, but he, too, insisted—and Australians to-day will thank him for it—that federation must be advanced.

"Her Majesty's Government would, of course, give their best attention to the separate recommendations of New Zealand or New South Wales on such a subject; but it must be obvious, as my predecessor insisted with much force, that if the colonies, after having consulted and acted together, do not unite in their recommendations, the power of Her Majesty's Government to advance British interests must be greatly reduced."<sup>1</sup>

When the Federal Council, the outcome of the Convention, met in January 1886 the debates showed a strong feeling of distrust of the Colonial Office. Mr (afterwards Sir Graham) Berry put the matter in a nutshell when he demanded that the Council should be kept informed "of every event no matter of what character, of an official kind, that is contemplated to be carried out, which affects the relations of these colonies with the islands of the Pacific. What may be done with a comparatively distant and unimportant island to-day may, if not protested against, be done to some nearer and more important island in the future."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.P. 1884-5, C. 4582.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. 1886, C. 4841.



**The Monroe Doctrine for Australia.**—At that moment British prestige in the Pacific was at the lowest possible ebb. In New Guinea England's vigilance had been evaded and her diplomacy badly worsted. In Samoa and elsewhere she had declined the proffered sovereignty and acknowledged the parallel rights of Germany. Everywhere she had limited her freedom of action by declarations and understandings, so that neither the colonies nor native races could look for her support in the only way in which it could be really effective.

The result was that the Monroe Doctrine of Australasia, which had first been enunciated by Sir George Grey forty years earlier, and was again affirmed by the Convention in a long series of resolutions, gained ground apace. To the disappointment about New Guinea and Samoa was added the new social grievance of the French penal settlement at New Caledonia.

Froude arrived in Australia when the irritation was at its height. "If Australia had been a single state," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "with a fleet of its own and with Melbourne statesmen at its head, it is not at all impossible, so angry were they, that of their own motion they would have sent their ships round to warn the Germans off." The Australians had unconsciously come to a Monroe Doctrine regarding the adjacent territories of the Pacific, which they intended should be theirs when they had time to occupy them. Froude considered it unreasonable to require England to challenge a great European power "in the interest of countries which might leave her on the morrow."

Yet to Froude also, as to Dilke, France seemed to be the main peril. Nor is it surprising, for only a few months later appeared that rabidly bellicose and anti-British volume of M. J. L. de Lanessan, *L'Expansion Coloniale de la France*. Smarting under the continued refusal of Great Britain to sanction the French sovereignty of Raiatea, he discusses quite frankly the organisation of the French possessions in the Pacific for a war against Great Britain.

**A New Orientation.**—As we have seen, events took a different turn. It was under the influence of the Russian scare that the colonies made their first naval agreement with England, and contracted to contribute so much per year to the upkeep of the British squadrons on the Australian station. Centres of dispute arose in Asia and Africa which distracted attention from the Pacific. But the abiding problem of Samoa and the Pacific cable question

<sup>1</sup> *Oceana*, by J. A. Froude.



remained, to exhibit the old negative attitude of declining to act which so exasperated the colonies. The only bright spot in these days was the Home Government's treatment of the recidiviste question with France. In this Derby took a genuine interest, and it must have been a satisfaction to him to see the matter brought so nearly a conclusion before he left office. The Imperial Government went to lengths with France over this matter that it had never ventured with Germany. And the outcome, though delayed, was entirely satisfactory.

In spite of some warm passages in an interview with Lord Salisbury, the Colonial Conference of 1887 was entirely cordial. There had been some cleaning up in regard to New Guinea, and the spheres of influence were delimited, and, moreover, Stanhope in August 1886 had given the quietus to the old veto to adventurers by instructing the High Commissioner that it had been decided to sanction the registration of purchases of land in the Western Pacific.

"The growth of enterprise," he wrote,<sup>1</sup> "and the inconvenience arising from the inability of British subjects to place on record their purchases of land in the islands—a disadvantage from which the subjects of certain other powers are exempt—appear to make it now advisable to institute a system of registration." The registration was not compulsory, but it definitely ended the régime when Englishmen were forbidden to be enterprising.

**The Chamberlain Spirit.**—Though relations improved, British prestige in the Pacific remained low for a decade after the succession of triumphs achieved by Germany. And it must be remembered that the mere tying of Great Britain's hand, in a wide region whose natives had been taught to look to her for justice and help, was in itself a triumph for her rivals. The advent of Joseph Chamberlain at the Colonial Office in 1895 brought to Pacific questions, at any rate, an intellect capable of being interested, a disposition to see the oversea point of view, and a character never afraid to act. Like most strong men, he had differences of opinion with the colonies, but the vigour and sympathy of his administration did much to restore confidence in his office. The result showed that what the colonies desired was not so much pampering as frankness and mutual confidence. They were no longer willing to be treated as the children Derby persisted in believing they were.

<sup>1</sup> P.P., C. 5091.

It was Chamberlain's misfortune that the eternal problem of Samoa was raised at a moment when Great Britain was much embarrassed by the enigmatical attitude of Germany towards the Boers. Successive inquiries must have left no room for doubt that Samoa could never be reasonably at peace unless a single power controlled her affairs. Great Britain had undertaken long since that she would not annex the islands, and had renewed this assurance to Germany. Germany's preponderant interests gave her a first claim to be considered, and it was obviously the wise part to endeavour to compromise British claims for advantages elsewhere. The whole conjuncture of affairs in 1899 suggested the wisdom of coming to a widespread agreement with Germany.

**The Partition of Samoa.**—Unfortunately the Government was so preoccupied and so overpowered by the necessity of getting the thing settled, that Salisbury opened the negotiations without any communication at all being made to the colonies interested. A few weeks later Chamberlain was the medium for informing them of the finished results of the discussions. The omission was especially reprehensible, in view of the fact that at the very moment of the negotiations the colonies were offering a remarkable and spontaneous demonstration of loyalty, and sending troops with unbounded enthusiasm to help in South Africa. Having conceded fifteen years earlier the right of the colonies to be heard where their interests were affected, Downing Street forgot all about the understanding, and for sheer lack of machinery, went ahead as if the colonies did not exist. The very urgency of the situation ensured that the colonies would not raise avoidable obstacles to any reasonable arrangement. The failure to consult them, therefore, deserves all the criticism that has been levelled against it.

The Convention of 14th November 1899 was on the whole a very good bargain for the Empire. The islands in Solomon which were ceded to Great Britain are likely to be of much greater value than the British rights in Samoa which were ceded to Germany, for the only good Samoan harbour—Pagopago, in Tutuila—was already in American hands. Germany, moreover, withdrew all her claims in Tonga and Savage Island. But the transaction was a blow to strong sentimental attachments between New Zealand and Samoa. It was the home of the race most closely allied with the Maori of New Zealand, a race which had frequently appealed to New Zealand for help. It was a group Christianised by

British missionaries. It was the home and burial-place of Robert Louis Stevenson. All these count for much in the spiritual life of a people; and a colony far on the road to national consciousness could not easily overlook the abandonment of such interests as if they did not exist. It was another set-back to the progressive improvement of oversea relations, and it had its effect in a recrudescence of distrust which has found expression very markedly in the peace discussions of the great war. New Zealand on the outbreak rushed avidly to seize a German colony in which she felt that her national honour was involved; and her ministers anticipated the peace discussions to declare that Samoa must never go back to Germany.

**Consulting Machinery.**—The fact was that the system of government had no place for consultation of the colonies in such cases. Foreign affairs were the domain of the British Government alone, and there was no machinery for admitting the colonies to such portions as had special interest for them. In spite of repeated assurances by successive ministers, the colonies were sure to be excluded from such discussions unless they happened to be represented by a secretary of state sufficiently interested in their opinions to insist that they should be heard.

It was not long before a fresh cause of complaint arose in the same way. In 1900 there was much talk of revising the New Hebrides arrangement. Mr Balfour told Sir Charles Dilke that no negotiations were in progress, and that "the colonies interested would certainly be given an opportunity of considering any arrangement proposed in connection with the group."

Year after year passed without any new development until the Anglo-French *rapprochement* of 1904 altered the whole aspect of our foreign relations. The agreement provided specifically for the New Hebrides, and New Zealand and Australia both cherished the hope that Britain would eventually acquire the sovereignty by concessions to France elsewhere—a vain hope, surely, in view of the evident determination of France for twenty years past not to withdraw.

**Lyttelton and Elgin in Defence.**—In his short tenure of office Lyttelton was called upon to defend the Imperial Government against the suggestion that the interests of Australia had been too lightly regarded in the Samoa convention. He warmly rebutted the charge, pointing out that in the preceding thirty years the whole of the Fiji,

Gilbert, Ellice, Solomon, and Cook Islands, and 88,000 square miles of New Guinea had been added to the Empire, mainly out of consideration for Australia and New Zealand, and sometimes solely for that reason. Could it then be said that His Majesty's Government had been "unmindful of the wishes of their kinsmen in the southern seas?" It would not be fair, he added, to ask that a sacrifice should be made of another part of the Empire in order to meet the wishes of Australia or New Zealand.

"His Majesty's Government have to take into account," he said, "not only the satisfaction that would be felt in Australia if the New Hebrides could be secured to the Empire by some concession elsewhere, but also the dissatisfaction which would be felt in that part of His Majesty's dominions at whose expense the concession was made."<sup>1</sup>

Elgin was put on his defence in the same way when the Convention of 1906 was put through without the Dominions being consulted. When the document was sent to them for approval before being ratified, with the remark that it must be accepted or rejected as it stood, neither Australia nor New Zealand considered that the understanding of previous consultation had been fulfilled. The correspondence is interesting from the fact that the two Dominions not merely acted in accord, but replied in identical despatches. Only constitutional etiquette, it is clear, prevented the matter being dealt with in a single correspondence. It was the first occasion on which they had acted in unison.

**Consultation after the Event.**—In an important despatch of 16th November 1906, Elgin made a spirited defence, quoting with full approval Lyttelton's defence of three years earlier, and counter-attacking with the charge that Australia had crimped the development of the New Hebrides by her customs tariff. He indignantly rejected the suggestion that the Dominions were any better informed on the New Hebrides than the officials who had represented Great Britain at the discussions.

Though the dispute had burned itself out, Deakin would not withdraw his complaint that the Convention had been "to all intents and purposes concluded before the Australian Government were informed of its existence." That is, in short, the crux of all the Australasian complaints. In every single instance—even where, as in Samoa, in New Guinea, and the New Hebrides, they had been specifically assured

<sup>1</sup> P.P., Cd., 3288.



they would be consulted beforehand — their first official knowledge of the negotiations came after they were concluded.

Deakin had made a tentative inquiry in 1905 as to whether a joint protectorate was favoured by the British Government. No reply was given. Three months later Downing Street informed Australia that a consultation was to take place on land claims, and the next despatch contained the signed convention for the future government of the group. Deakin claimed with some justice that "it could not be alleged that either in fact or in name his government had been consulted in any particular." Elgin would not admit the charge, and he concluded the controversy gracefully with the remark that rather than continue the discussion he would "welcome the promise of cordial co-operation which Mr Deakin tenders" (Elgin to Governor-General of Australia, 1st March 1907).<sup>1</sup>

At the Imperial Conference a few months later Deakin continued the argument:—

"But for the action of Australia and New Zealand," he said, "there would not be an island to-day in the Pacific under the British flag. Whatever losses there are have been due to neglect here. Every single gain has been due to pressure from Australia and New Zealand. Is it therefore to be wondered at that the feeling has been created, and still exists in Australia—an exasperated feeling—that British Imperial interests in that ocean have been mishandled from the first? It is more by good luck than by good management that we retain even the islands that we possess. I don't think this procedure is capable of any defence except by the frank statement that it was due to an entire oversight—that Australia and New Zealand had dropped out of view. All I am concerned to insist upon now is that there should be no pretence that any respect whatever was paid, or sought to be paid, to the opinion of Australia, or any recognition given to us in a very serious matter on which we certainly were entitled to be consulted, or at least informed, at every step."<sup>2</sup>

**Trade of the Pacific.**—The Australian Government in March 1916 set up an interstate commission on the trade of the Pacific, with a view to formulating an after-war policy. The report, which was presented two years later, emphasised the fact that the importance of the Pacific domain of the Empire could not be judged either by the land surface of the vast archipelago of archipelagos, or by its population,

<sup>1</sup> P.P., Cd. 3525.

<sup>2</sup> P.P., N.Z., 1907, A.5.



estimated at only about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million souls. The trade figures for the year 1913 are given as below:—

<i>British—</i>	Imports.	Exports.
Fiji . . . . .	£903,968	£1,425,940
Solomon . . . . .	162,761	148,265
Gilbert and Ellice . . . . .	103,559	330,518
Tonga . . . . .	181,044	82,321
Norfolk . . . . .	12,000	4,000
Cook . . . . .	122,903	122,096
	<u>£1,486,235</u>	<u>£2,113,140</u>
<i>Foreign—</i>		
New Caledonia . . . . .	£708,316	£633,536
Society . . . . .	361,218	462,180
Samoa (U.S.A.) . . . . .	27,400	27,250
Samoa (German) . . . . .	250,000	250,000
	<u>£1,346,934</u>	<u>£1,372,966</u>
<i>New Guinea—</i>		
British . . . . .	£218,323	£128,016
German (Bismarck, Caroline, etc.) . . . . .	450,000	595,000
	<u>£668,323</u>	<u>£723,016</u>
<i>New Hebrides</i> . . . . .	<u>£150,000</u>	<u>£160,000</u>
Grand total . . . . .	<u>£3,651,492</u>	<u>£4,369,122</u>

Other statistics showed the trade of the three Pacific powers of Europe with the islands to be as follows:—

	Exports to Islands.		Imports from Islands.	
	1912.	1913.	1912.	1913.
Great Britain . . . . .	£502,126	£454,967	£284,156	£321,760
Germany . . . . .	905,000	1,050,000	155,000	165,000
France . . . . .	632,000	680,000	400,000	444,000

The value of the trade of Australia and New Zealand with the islands in 1913 was as follows:—

	Imports from Islands.	Exports to Islands.
Australia . . . . .	£1,203,841	£1,239,879
New Zealand . . . . .	916,259	295,053

**Production in the Islands.**—In the different islands of the Pacific practically all the products of the tropics have been raised with success—sugar in Fiji; cotton in Fiji and Tahiti; coffee in New Guinea, New Hebrides, and New Caledonia; copra everywhere. Owing to heavy freights and the lack of cheap labour or near markets, one after another has fallen off in production. The most noteworthy exception is the production of cane sugar in Fiji, which has become so important to both Australia and New Zealand that labour has been obtained from India to secure its permanence.

Throughout the whole of the Western Pacific the prolific growth of the coco-nut palm has led to a steadily increasing output of copra. The demand for oil for margarine has expanded tremendously, and to-day copra is by far the most lucrative and promising industry in the Pacific.

In 1913, the Commission states, one-seventh of the exported copra of the world came from those islands of the South Seas which are regarded as coming within the Pacific itself, while practically the whole of the 490,600 metric tons of exported copra in the world came from this area and from the adjacent islands of the East Indies and the Philippines. The potentialities of the industry are evidently immense.

It is scarcely possible to consider in the same economic category the guano workings of Ocean Island, which at present are yielding great wealth to their owners and to the colonial revenue, since the deposits cannot be reproduced and must sooner or later come to an end.

**Administrative Cohesion Needed.**—The Commission sees great weakness to the Empire and to Empire trade in the lack of cohesion or uniformity in the organs of government, or any general policy tending to weld them together. In Fiji we have a Crown colony with some measure of representative government; in Tonga a quaint protectorate with a British resident; in Cook a dependency of New Zealand with a representative native government and a resident; in Papua a "territory" administered by the Commonwealth of Australia; in the New Hebrides a condominium with a medley of jurisdictions; and over the Western Pacific generally the High Commissioner, who is also Governor of Fiji, holds sway and exercises it chiefly through a number of deputies. No wonder the Australian Commission pleads:—

"It cannot too strongly urge that it has already become a pressing necessity to concentrate in some new form of government

the authority of the Crown now scattered among so many administrations. While there is great divergence of view as to the shape which a central authority should take, almost all those interested agree that some direct authority should be established to give uniformity, promptitude, and efficiency to the task of administration and of economic development in the islands."

The Commission suggests tentatively a federal system which should respect existing forms of government as far as possible, and be under a high commissioner having his headquarters at Sydney, though not in any way subject to the Commonwealth Government. That is, of course, a question on which New Zealand would probably hold a different opinion.

**The Language Question.**—Not the least striking evidence of the lack of cohesion in the administrative policy is the multiplicity of languages in official use in the different groups. In their native state the Polynesian races all spoke slight variations of one language, which enabled the Hawaiian and the Samoan, the Tahitian and the Maori, severed by hundreds of years of isolation and by thousands of miles of ocean, to understand each other with little trouble. A considered policy could so easily have adapted this tongue for universal use that it is astonishing to find this was not done.

Melanesian and Polynesian meet at Fiji. To the westward the woolly-headed and more savage islanders of New Hebrides, Solomon, and Papua are not quite so well equipped. In most of the islands it was the British missionaries who committed the native language to writing. As a general rule the missionaries have acquired a knowledge of the native tongue to enable them the more readily to converse with the people. As a consequence the teaching of English is not even yet general in the wide diocese of the Bishop of Melanesia.

In the French possessions, on the other hand, the secular authorities have insisted on the teaching of French even in the schools of the British missions, as an instrument for spreading French influence. The same practice is followed by the Germans. During their last years in Samoa they even insisted on the English and American members of the Municipal Council at Apia speaking German.

Yet by historical conjuncture the English language was extremely favoured in the Pacific. English-speaking traders and whalers and missionaries were everywhere in advance

of others. The British man-of-war carried law and order even where no jurisdiction at all existed. And above all, the great bulk of the island trade, until the last few years, has been with the English-speaking colonies of Australia and New Zealand. By sheer force of circumstances English was the dominant language of the Pacific, even in the possessions of other powers. The quaint blackfellow patois of English had obtained such a hold before other nationalities came into the Pacific that it has been able to survive a decade or two of official discrimination by both French and Germans.

Robert Louis Stevenson in 1889 declared pidgin-English, or "*beach la mar*," to be the language of the Pacific. In Majuro he found a Marshall Island boy who had been taught English in the German firm at Jaluit, and could speak no German at all. In Rapa-iti, where French was the official language, the children picked up English "on the wayside"; and we know how earnestly the French laboured to eradicate English in Loyalty. A grammar and vocabulary of Samoan, published in Germany after fifteen years of occupation and forty of predominance,<sup>1</sup> contained only a single word which was clearly adapted by the natives from German, and a host of Samoanised English words. In New Guinea, too, the triumphant Australian forces in 1914 found the Germans dealing with their kanakas in blackfellow English; and it was in the same quaint jargon that the conquerors issued their proclamation to the natives.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> By H. Neffgen, trans. by Arnold B. Stock.

<sup>2</sup> *Australia v. Germany*, by F. S. Burnell.

## CHAPTER XXII

### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

**The Trustees of the Islands.**—The necessity for a forward policy in the organisation of the Pacific is now urgent. All who have interests there, and particularly the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand, are determined that the policy of drift and incohesion must cease, and that the islands which are in the trusteeship of Great Britain and the Dominions shall be developed to the utmost.

The problem has four main facets :—

1. The sovereignty of the islands at present held, pending the decision of the Peace Conference, must be determined.
2. The form of administration of the British possessions, individually and collectively, must be decided upon by consultation between the Colonial Office and the governments of Australia and New Zealand.
3. A scheme must be devised for utilising the unoccupied land and the labour of the native inhabitants.
4. Communications must be vastly improved.

While the peace negotiations are still unconcluded, it may be premature to forecast a partition of the erstwhile German possessions. Yet certain principles have clearly emerged from the discussions of the past four years. Claims which in the first year or two were not openly asserted have crystallised owing to the protraction of the struggle. It was on behalf of the Allies collectively that Australia seized Kaiser Wilhelmsland and Bismarck; New Zealand German Samoa; and Japan the German islands north of the Line; and in execution of their trust they had to provide a regular administration. As the months passed without any sign of the end, the trustees gradually assumed a proprietorial standing, and the actual ownership of the groups came to be regarded as an offset to the steadily mounting war bills of the Allies.



Within the last eighteen months Japan, Australia, and New Zealand have, in effect, renounced officially their disinterestedness, and have demanded to retain their holdings in perpetuity. Nor has any disposition been evinced to contest the claim.

**An Element of Misgiving.**—As regards the two British dominions, there is not much prospect of dispute, except that France may ask compensating advantages. The unhappy Pacific policy of the Colonial Office before the war created in New Guinea and in Samoa irredentist regions for Australia and New Zealand respectively. The administrative record of the two dominions—Australia in Papua and New Zealand in Samoa—has certainly been such that the Allies for whom they hold the new lands in trust can feel every confidence in continuing the trust in perpetuity. America has shown no desire to widen the possessions she holds in Samoa—a mere calling-place for her merchant ships—and her acquiescence in the administration of German Samoa by New Zealand is almost certain. There are signs, too, that the protectorate of Tonga will shortly be handed over to the administration of New Zealand. And the Dominion will thus become the steward for the Empire of the whole of British Polynesia, an area extending from 155 deg. to 180 deg. W. longitude and northward to 8 deg. S., and embracing three important branches of the Polynesian race. It is equally satisfactory that Australia should assume the control of the whole of non-Dutch New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago. That is the only arrangement, in the light of our Pacific history, which can possibly satisfy Australia and give her a proper feeling of security.

Japan's claim to the small islands north of the equator is certain to be sanctioned out of appreciation for Japanese loyalty to the cause of the Allies. Nevertheless, this first stepping-out of the Asiatic power into far outposts in the Pacific is an entirely new departure, and it cannot fail to contain the seeds of new misgivings for the future.

**The New Hebrides Difficulty.**—The control of the New Hebrides remains the problem of the Western Pacific and the most logical pretext of disputes for the immediate future. For the future peace of the Pacific and the continuance of Anglo-French goodwill that problem must be faced and settled without delay.

The Condominium is an abnormal arrangement and entirely unsatisfactory. It yields to the settlers neither

security nor the advantage of being a full citizen of either power. Nor does it possess the vigour to govern effectively the native population. On the face of it there does not appear to be any guarantee, apart from the *entente cordiale* between France and England, that the New Hebrides may not degenerate into another Samoa? Under existing conditions the French residents appear to thrive better than the British, chiefly because the proximity of New Caledonia, with a benevolently disposed administration, affords them preferences which the British do not enjoy.

Neither Australia nor New Zealand has ever approved the New Hebrides arrangement. When it was under discussion fifteen years ago New Zealand plainly saw the danger of trying to perpetuate the system of dual control, which had failed so tragically in Samoa, and the New Zealand Government strongly urged a partition of the group in preference to a joint protectorate.

**Suggestions for a Settlement.** — Mere geographical reasons would seem to favour the withdrawal of Great Britain in favour of France, for the New Hebrides fall logically within the orbit of New Caledonia. In spite of hopes which have been cherished by Australia and New Zealand ever since the understanding of 1878, France has never shown the slightest disposition to withdraw from the group. The value to her of New Caledonia has in recent years been very much augmented by the development of the vast deposits of nickel, an essential and rare raw material of French industry. France has more than once desired—and very naturally—to extend her sovereignty, and in 1885 concluded an agreement with Germany to eliminate any possible opposition from that direction.

Moreover, many far-seeing Australians recognise a clear Australian interest in retaining France as a benevolent neighbour in the Western Pacific, which being admitted, there are cogent reasons for satisfying her aspirations as far as may be consistent with national honour.

The main obstacle, as France would probably frankly admit, was created by her own policy of transportation and her treatment of Protestant missions and English centres of influence. For fifty years, apart altogether from Australian commercial enterprises, there has been an unremitting contest in this region between the missionary interest of Australia and the political and commercial activity of the French. France can hardly consider unreasonable the fear of Australia and New Zealand that her policy of discrimina-

tion would crop up again in some form if she were entrusted with the government of the New Hebrides.

When the Condominium was set up, Deakin protested that any attempt to establish two codes of law and two administrations within one community must fail. Fifteen years' experience has fully vindicated his fears. It is clear that a unitary code and a unitary administration, to which all residents of the group—French, British, and native—should be alike responsible, are essential. The failure of the Condominium is due to the inequalities of treatment and responsibility resulting from the operation of two different administrations side by side. It is scarcely open to argument that these inequalities have been all to the disadvantage of the British settlers, and largely to the advantage of the French, and largely by reason of them, French interests have waxed in comparison with British.

**A Case for a Mandate.**—In the light of recent developments the New Hebrides case seems to be an ideal one for the application of the mandatory principle of government. But the success of mandatory government is dependent upon a unitary code and administration, and it will be a difficult matter in the light of history to persuade Australia and New Zealand that the mandate should be entrusted to France.

Unless, therefore, France will accept the mandate of Great Britain for this region, we are brought again face to face with the old demand of New Zealand, that there should be a definite partition of the group between the two powers.

**Defective Administration.**—Assuming the question of sovereignty in all the islands to be decided, there is still much to be done to make the administration of the British possessions cohesive and efficient. The local administrations are in general very efficient. Fiji is an exemplary instance of Crown colony government. Gilbert and Ellice, the newest of the Crown colonies, is also unexceptionable. In the Solomons the resident commissioners have succeeded very well in policing the natives and reducing the country to a state of law and order.

Yet it cannot be said that in any instance the Government goes far beyond the elementary duties of police and sanitation, or far into the sphere of modern technical education, with a view to leading the natives into ways of economic value. The principle of protecting the natives against the encroachments of the whites has been carried to the extent of curbing the whites themselves in the provision of that

employment for the natives which is vital to their future welfare. There is no doubt that under a more energetic commercial policy the British possessions in Melanesia and Polynesia would by now be more developed and more wealthy than they are, and as a consequence the natives would be a more efficient economic factor than they are. As the Australian Interstate Commission points out, the general character of the education imparted to natives by the missionary schools is not suitable for modern requirements. It does not teach the natives to be efficient workers.

**Axioms of Native Policy.**—In New Zealand it has been accepted as an axiom of native policy that the best that can be done for the natives is to encourage them to be workers and taxpayers—developers, if possible, of their own domain. This can best be achieved by the active example and tutelage of white residents, whose own enterprise and industry must be fostered by favourable conditions of land tenure and labour regulations.

It is partly due to the exaggerated policy of conserving native title to land that the Polynesians and Melanesians are here and there a race of landlords independent of their own labour except to a slight extent, and existing side by side with numerous bodies of imported labourers. The proportion of natives throughout the Pacific who are employed on the plantations of the Europeans is ridiculously small.

In most of the islands the population is very sparse in relation to the natural resources, and there is no necessity to perpetuate, with the object of being fair to the natives, the example set in New Zealand in 1840, when it was laid down that every acre of land in a country only half occupied was the property of the Maori race.

The sovereign race owes it to the aborigines that they should be secured in the title of all the land they require for their generous sustenance. This principle has been established and vindicated in New Zealand to the lasting credit of the white population. But, that provision having been made, it is entirely for the benefit of the natives that the balance of the land should be made available on attractive terms to white enterprisers, whose prosperity provides both an inspiring example and abundance of employment for the native race. New Zealand found that widely-acred landlords could still be indigent, and proceeded to individualise the native title so as to throw each owner, if possible, on his own initiative and enterprise.

**An Obsolete High Commission.**—As regards cohesion of



external policy, practically everything remains to be done. Communications must inevitably be foremost in the organisation of a domain spread so widely over the face of the ocean as this of Britain in the South Pacific. And the communications of the region are much less effective than they need be. Sporadic efforts have been made by this authority and that—by the Australian Commonwealth, by the Government of New Zealand, by the High Commission for the Western Pacific—to provide steam communication with the different groups. But it must be confessed the result is not nearly so efficient as the reticulation provided by the Germans for their possessions, with one terminal at Hongkong and the other at Sydney, giving alternative routes to Europe.

"The difficulty of communications," says the Colonial Office Report (Cd. 5582), "still remains the great obstacle to adequate administration and adequate development of the Western Pacific." These difficulties strikingly emphasise the failure of the High Commission for the Western Pacific in its capacity of a supervising authority over the local administrations of this vast region. Nearly forty years ago Sir Arthur Gordon and his colleagues urged that the headquarters of the High Commission should be moved from Fiji, which had its own adequate government, to some spot in the New Hebrides, which they divined would be more central in the changing orientation of the future. Long ago the centre of gravity moved westward, but the High Commissioner remained seated in Fiji, on the extreme eastern fringe of his jurisdiction, 600 miles from the New Hebrides and 1200 miles from the Solomons, where its authority was constantly required.

Speaking at the Melanesian Mission meeting in London only a few months ago, the retiring High Commissioner (Sir E. Bickham Sweet-Escott) admitted that he had not been able to visit these groups at all in six years of office.<sup>1</sup> Nor

<sup>1</sup> "Although for six years I was Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, I was unfortunately prevented by circumstances beyond my control from visiting the Solomon Islands, where the principal activities of the Melanesian Mission are carried on, and those parts of the New Hebrides where the Mission does such excellent work. . . . H.M.S. *Torch*, attached to the Australian Fleet, was the one vessel placed at the disposal of the High Commissioner for conveying him to the different parts of his very wide dominions in the Western Pacific. Once H.M.S. *Torch* came to take me to the Solomon Islands, and her sailing was countermanded; a second time she was coming, but was countermanded before she left for Fiji. Then in July 1914 came the rumours of war."—*The Southern Cross Log*, December 1918.



could he communicate freely by telegraph. In 1909 a Pacific Conference decided upon a system of wireless communications; yet in the early stages of the great war the German squadron in the Pacific had the full advantage of its absence. In 1911 Fiji had its low-power station; the Resident Commissioner at Solomon had just obtained his necessary yacht; and his colleague at New Hebrides was looking forward to acquiring one. In 1916 the fruit exporters of Rarotonga agreed to tax their industry a penny a case to maintain a wireless station there. And finally, in the middle of 1918, the first weak chain, embracing Tahiti, Fiji, and Rarotonga, was complete.

**A Federative Commercial Policy.**—The revision of the High Commission is essential if its authority is to be more than a farce and an obstacle to organisation. Not only must the headquarters be changed, but the functions of the office must be altogether different. Possibly it may resolve itself into the governing authority of a federation of the British groups; but the present tendency is in the direction of the abolition of the existing office and the transfer of the supervision of the different groups to Australia or New Zealand. This would have the evident advantage of interesting these two great communities in the material welfare of their islands; but it would accentuate, if possible, the necessity for some authority of acknowledged prestige, whose duty it should be to co-ordinate administrative policy throughout the region, and especially to bring about a joint policy of communications by sea and wireless, with low freights for island produce and reciprocal tariff treatment, to encourage both shipping and insular production. It might be the part of the local administrations to provide interinsular shipping to concentrate trade in suitable ports, but only a joint policy can furnish an adequate system of ocean lines.

And here again the *rapprochement* with France should be invoked to bring about a mutual arrangement of benefits. Australia and New Zealand can scarcely suffer from the competition of the tiny French realm in the Western Pacific. They cannot in any case eliminate French steamship lines running to New Caledonia, which must necessarily send much trade through Australian ports. The admission of France to the shipping agreement and to the reciprocal tariff arrangement would strengthen both French and British interests.

**The Language Question.**—As a matter of purely

British concern it devolves on the Colonial Office to insist on the teaching of the English language in all schools in British possessions. Hitherto Government has done little or nothing to spread the English language in the Pacific. In Fiji at an early stage it selected the dialect of Bau and made it the official language for the group. In Melanesia much of the teaching of the British Mission is in the Mota tongue, which has to be taught to evangelists and to converts speaking a host of other dialects and tongues.

The Australian Commission has recommended the teaching of English in native schools, and it is a recommendation that cannot be resisted. The fact that "pidgin"-English is almost universal throughout the Pacific is a valid reason for regarding the teaching of English itself as a right rather than an imposition. Besides assisting in the spread of English influence, it would greatly facilitate the movement of the native population without unnecessary hardship, as the development of local industry makes that movement necessary. The traditional British policy of leaving missions to be advanced by private effort is one that has triumphed in severe tests; but one might suggest as quite a legitimate act of government that subsidies should be granted from state funds to mission schools in consideration of the teaching of English.

The teaching of English will probably be the least contested of all the measures of organisation, and a radical alteration in the office of the High Commission certainly not the most contested.



# TREATIES AND CONVENTIONS

## DECLARATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF NEW ZEALAND,

*28th October 1835.*

[TRANSLATION.]

"1. WE, the hereditary chiefs and heads of the tribes of the Northern parts of New Zealand, being assembled at Waitangi, in the Bay of Islands, on this 28th day of October 1835, declare the Independence of our country, which is hereby constituted and declared to be an Independent State, under the designation of the United Tribes of New Zealand.

"2. All sovereign power and authority within the territories of the United Tribes of New Zealand is hereby declared to reside entirely and exclusively in the hereditary chiefs and heads of tribes in their collective capacity, who also declare that they will not permit any legislative authority separate from themselves in their collective capacity to exist, nor any function of government to be exercised within the said territories, unless by persons appointed by them, and acting under the authority of laws regularly enacted by them in Congress assembled.

"3. The hereditary chiefs and heads of tribes agree to meet in Congress at Waitangi in the autumn of each year, for the purpose of framing laws for the dispensation of justice, the preservation of peace and good order, and the regulation of trade; and they cordially invite the Southern tribes to lay aside their private animosities and to consult the safety and welfare of our common country, by joining the Confederation of the United Tribes.

"4. They also agree to send a copy of this Declaration to His Majesty the King of England, to thank him for his acknowledgment of their flag; and in return for the friendship and protection they have shown, and are prepared to show, to such of his subjects as have settled in their country, or resorted to its shores for the purposes of trade, they entreat that he will continue to be the parent of their infant State, and that he will become its Protector from all attempts upon its independence.

"Agreed to unanimously on this 28th day of October 1835, in the presence of His Britannic Majesty's Resident."

[Signed, in the presence of four leading English witnesses, by thirty-five chiefs of tribes between North Cape and the River Thames.]

## THE TREATY OF WAITANGI,

*6th February 1840.*

"Her Majesty Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, regarding with Her Royal Favour the Native Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand, and anxious to protect their just Rights and Property, and to secure to them the enjoyment of Peace and Good Order, has deemed it necessary in consequence of the great number of Her Majesty's Subjects who have already settled in New Zealand, and the rapid extension of Emigration, both from Europe and Australia, which is still in progress, to constitute and appoint a functionary properly authorised to treat with the Aborigines of New Zealand for the recognition of Her Majesty's sovereign authority over the whole or any part of those islands. Her Majesty, therefore, being desirous to establish a settled form of Civil Government, with a view to avert the evil consequences which must result from the absence of the necessary Laws and Institutions alike to the native population and to Her subjects, has been graciously pleased to empower and to authorise me, William Hobson, a Captain in Her Majesty's Royal Navy, Consul and Lieutenant-Governor of such parts of New Zealand as may be, or hereafter shall be, ceded to Her Majesty, to invite the confederated and independent Chiefs of New Zealand, to concur in the following Articles and Conditions :—

"*Article the First.*—The Chiefs of the Confederation of the United Tribes of New Zealand, and the separate and independent Chiefs who have not become members of the Confederation, cede to Her Majesty the Queen of England, absolutely and without reservation, all the rights and powers of Sovereignty which the said Confederation or Individual Chiefs respectively exercise or possess, or may be supposed to exercise or to possess over their respective territories as the sole sovereigns thereof.

"*Article the Second.*—Her Majesty the Queen of England confirms and guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand, and to the respective families and individuals thereof, the full, exclusive, and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates, Forests, Fisheries, and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess, so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession ; but the Chiefs of the United Tribes and the individual Chiefs yield to Her Majesty the exclusive right of Pre-emption over such lands as the proprietors thereof may be disposed to alienate, at such prices as may be agreed upon between the respective Proprietors and persons appointed by Her Majesty to treat with them in that behalf.

"*Article the Third.*—In consideration thereof, Her Majesty the Queen of England extends to the natives of New Zealand Her Royal protection, and imparts to them all the Rights and Privileges of British subjects.

W. HOBSON, *Lieutenant-Governor.*

"Now, therefore, We the Chiefs of the Confederation of the United Tribes of New Zealand, being assembled in Congress at Victoria in Waitangi, and We, the Separate and Independent Chiefs of New Zealand claiming authority over the Tribes and Territories



which are specified after our respective names, having been made fully to understand the Provisions of the foregoing Treaty, accept and enter into the same in the full spirit and meaning thereof, in witness of which we have attached our signatures or marks at the places and the dates respectively specified.

"Done at Waitangi, this sixth day of February in the year of our Lord, One thousand eight hundred and forty."

("Facsimiles of the Declaration of Independence and the Treaty of Waitangi"; Government Printer, New Zealand, 1892.)

## INDEPENDENCE OF HAWAII.

DECLARATION between Great Britain and France relative to the independence of the Sandwich Islands: signed at London, 28th November 1843, by Lord Aberdeen and the Comte St Aulaire.

"Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the King of the French, taking into consideration the existence in the Sandwich Islands of a government capable of providing for the regularity of its relations with foreign nations, have thought it right to engage reciprocally to consider the Sandwich Islands as an independent state and never to take possession either directly or under the title of a protectorate or under any other form of any part of the territory of which they are composed."—*Hertslet's Treaties*, vol. ix., p. 255.

## THE RAIATEA DECLARATION OF 1847.

DECLARATION between Great Britain and France acknowledging the independence of the islands of Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora, and of the small islands adjacent thereto, signed at London, 19th June 1847, by the plenipotentiaries, Lord Palmerston and the Comte de Jarnac.

"Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the King of the French, being desirous of removing a cause of discussion between their respective governments relative to the islands in the Pacific Ocean which are hereinafter designated, have thought proper reciprocally to engage:—

"1. Formerly [*sic*] to acknowledge the independence of the Islands of Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora (to the leeward of Tahiti), and of the small islands adjacent to and dependent upon those islands.

"2. Never to take possession of the said islands, nor of any one or more of them, either absolutely, or under the title of a Protectorate, or in any other form whatever.

"3. Never to acknowledge that a Chief or Prince reigning in Tahiti can at the same time reign in any one or more of the other islands above mentioned: nor, on the other hand, that a Chief or Prince reigning in any one or more of those other islands can reign at the same time in Tahiti: the reciprocal independence of the islands above mentioned, and of the Island of Tahiti and its dependencies, being established as a principle."—*Hertslet's Treaties*, vol. viii., p. 998; P.P., C. 5256.

## THE NEW HEBRIDES UNDERSTANDING, 1878.

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE, *le 18 Janvier, 1878.*

M. LE COMTE,—Il s'est établi entre l'île de la Nouvelle Calédonie et le groupe des Nouvelles Hébrides des rapports d'ordre commercial qui se sont rapidement développés en raison de leur voisinage et qui présentent pour la prospérité de notre établissement colonial une importance considérable.

Mon Gouvernement qui attache beaucoup de prix à ce que ces relations continuent sur le même pied se préoccupe dans une certaine mesure d'un mouvement d'opinion qui se serait produit en Australie dans ce dernier temps. Les journaux de ces pays auraient dénoué l'intention qu'ils attribuent à la France de réunir les Nouvelles Hébrides à ses possessions et demanderaient qu'afin de prévenir cette éventualité l'archipel dont il s'agit fût placé sous la souveraineté de la couronne d'Angleterre.

Sans attacher à ce mouvement de l'opinion une très-grande importance, mon Gouvernement tient toutefois à déclarer que pour ce qui le concerne il n'a pas le projet de porter atteinte à l'indépendance des Nouvelles Hébrides et il serait heureux de savoir que de son côté le Gouvernement de S.M. est également disposé à la respecter.—Veuillez, etc.,

(Sé.) D'HARCOURT.

S.E. LE COMTE DE DERBY.

## FOREIGN OFFICE TO COLONIAL OFFICE.

FOREIGN OFFICE, *1st February 1878.*

SIR,—I am directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, a copy of a communication received from the French Ambassador at this Court calling attention to certain articles which have recently appeared in the Australian newspapers advocating the annexation of the islands of the New Hebrides to the British Crown, and stating that, although the French Government do not attach any great importance to this movement in favour of annexation, still, as they themselves have no intentions with regard to this group, they would be glad to receive an assurance to this effect from Her Majesty's Government.

I am now to state that Lord Derby proposes, with the concurrence of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, to inform the French Ambassador, in reply to His Excellency's communication, that Her Majesty's Government have no intention of proposing any measures to Parliament with a view of changing the condition of independence which the New Hebrides Islands now enjoy.—I am, etc.,

(Signed) T. V. LISTER.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE,  
COLONIAL OFFICE.

## COLONIAL OFFICE TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

DOWNING STREET, 20th February 1878.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 1st instant, I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to acquaint you that he concurs in the terms of the reply which the Earl of Derby proposes to give to the enquiry of the French Ambassador at this Court with reference to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government in respect of the New Hebrides group.—I am etc.,

(Signed) W. R. MALCOLM.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE,  
FOREIGN OFFICE.

## CIRCULAR DESPATCH TO GOVERNORS OF AUSTRALIAN COLONIES, FIJI, TASMANIA, AND NEW ZEALAND.

DOWNING STREET, 28th February 1878.

SIR,—I have the honour to transmit to you, for your information (and for that of your Government<sup>1</sup>), a copy of a letter from the Foreign Office, enclosing a communication which has been received from the French Ambassador at this Court with reference to the relations of Her Majesty's Government in respect of the New Hebrides group, together with a copy of the reply which I caused to be addressed to the Foreign Office.—I have, etc.,

(Signed) M. E. HICKS-BEACH.

—P.P., C. 3863.

## ANGLO-SAMOAN TREATY.

28th August 1879.

*Article II.*—"The King and Government (Malo) of Samoa engage to grant to no other Sovereign or State any rights, privileges, authority, or predominance in Samoa in excess of such as are or may be accorded to Her Britannic Majesty. The subjects of Her Britannic Majesty shall always enjoy in Samoa whatever rights, privileges, and immunities shall be granted to those of the most-favoured nation, and no rights, privileges, or immunities shall be granted to the subjects of any foreign State that shall not be equally and unconditionally accorded to the subjects of Her Britannic Majesty."

*Article III.*—"Full liberty for the free pursuit of commerce, trade, and agriculture is guaranteed to British subjects, as well as the peaceable possession of all lands heretofore purchased by them from Samoans in a customary and regular manner, and in the event of any dispute arising as to the fact of such purchase, it shall be determined by a Commission, to consist of one person nominated by the Samoan Government (Malo), and one nominated by Her Britannic Majesty's

<sup>1</sup> To responsible colonies only.

Consul: and in the event of their disagreement, they shall themselves select an umpire: or, if they fail to do so, such umpire shall be appointed by Her Majesty's Consul-General. All British subjects resident in Samoa shall be exempt from war contributions, military requisitions, and occupation of their houses and lands by war parties."

*Article VII.*—"Her Britannic Majesty engages to cause regulations to be issued to enforce the observance by British subjects of such of the existing municipal Laws and Police Regulations of Samoa as may be hereafter agreed upon by agreement between the Government of Her Britannic Majesty and that of the Samoan State, and for the due observance of quarantine by British subjects."

*Article VIII.*—"Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain may, if she think fit, establish on the shores of a Samoan harbour, to be hereafter designated by Her Majesty, a naval station and coaling depot: but this article shall not apply to the harbours of Apia or Saluafata, or to that part of the harbour of Pagopago which may be hereafter selected by the Government of the United States as a station under the provisions of the Treaty concluded between the United States of America and the Samoan Government, on the seventeenth day of January, in the year One thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight."

[The treaty is signed on behalf of Great Britain by Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, and Mr Alfred P. Maudslay, a Deputy-Commissioner: and on behalf of the King and Government of Samoa by Malietoa Laupepa himself, and the High Chief Saga le Auauua.]

—P.P., C. 2747.

## CONVENTION FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF APIA, SAMOA,

*Signed at Apia, 2nd September 1879.*

This convention, for the good government and neutrality of Apia, was agreed upon by the same plenipotentiaries as the above, but in consultation with representatives of the other treaty powers, namely:—For Germany, Korvetten-Kapitan F. Mensing, of the gunboat *Albatross*, and Theodore Weber, the German Consul for Samoa and Tonga: for the United States—Captain R. Chandler, of the U.S. warship *Lackawanna*, and Thomas M. Dawson, United States Consul at Apia.

*Article II* placed the town and district under the control of a Municipal Board consisting of the foreign consuls resident in Apia representing the treaty powers. "Representatives of every such nation, having a consul in Samoa, shall, at a future period be added to the said board, and shall be chosen in such manner, and exercise such functions, as may be provided by regulations to be hereafter agreed upon and published by the said Board."

*Article VIII.*—"The foregoing articles shall in no way prejudice the territorial integrity of Samoa, and the Samoan flag shall be hoisted at such place of meeting of the municipal board as may be permanently adopted."

*Article IX.*—"In case of civil war, the town and district of Apia, and the adjacent districts comprised between the boundaries of the town and district of Apia and Letogo, Tiapepe Point, and Siusega shall be considered as neutral territory, and the Municipal Board may frame and issue such regulations as may be considered necessary for the support and maintenance of such neutrality."

*Article X.*—"The present Convention shall be revised at the end of four years from its date, and if the internal state of Samoa at that time will happily admit thereof, without prejudice to the interests of the foreign residents in Samoa, the powers conferred by the present convention upon the Municipal Board of Apia shall cease and determine, and the district again pass under the control and authority of the Samoan Government, or such other authority as may be agreed upon between the Samoan Government and the High Contracting Parties."—P.P., C. 2748.

### SULU AND NORTH BORNEO PROTOCOL.

*Signed at Madrid, 7th March 1885.*

*Article I.*—The Governments of Great Britain and of Germany recognise the sovereignty of Spain over the places effectively occupied, as well as over those places not yet occupied, of the archipelago of Sulu (Joló), of which the limits are laid down in Article II.

*Article II.*—The archipelago of Sulu (Joló), conformably to the definition contained in Article I. of the Treaty signed the 23rd September 1836, between the Spanish Government and the Sultan of Sulu (Joló), comprises all the islands which are found between the western extremity of the island of Mindanao on the one side and the Continent of Borneo and the island of Paragua on the other side, with the exception of those which are indicated in Article III. It is understood that the islands of Balabac and of Cagayan Joló form part of the archipelago.

*Article III.*—The Spanish Government renounces, as far as regards the British Government, all claims to sovereignty over the territories of the continent of Borneo which belong, or which have belonged in the past, to the Sultan of Sulu (Joló), and which comprise the neighbouring islands of Balambangan, Banguay, and Malawali, as well as all those comprised within the zone of three maritime leagues from the coast and which form part of the territories administered by the Company styled "The British North Borneo Company."—*Hertslet's Treaties and Conventions*, vol. xvii., p. 1016.

### SOVEREIGNTY OF THE CAROLINES, PROTOCOL BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND SPAIN.

*Signed at Madrid, 8th January 1886.*

"The Governments of Great Britain and Spain, being desirous of affording a proof of the friendly feeling which unites the two nations, the undersigned Sir Francis Clare Ford, K.C.M.G., C.B., Her Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the



Court of Madrid, and His Excellency Don Segismundo Moret y Prendergast, Minister of State to Her Majesty the Queen Regent of Spain, duly authorised thereto by their respective governments, declare as follows :—

"I. It is agreed that Her Britannic Majesty's Government will recognise the sovereignty of Spain over the Caroline Islands, and the Pelew Islands to the same extent as such sovereignty has been, or may hereafter be, recognised by the German Government.

"II. It is agreed that whatsoever privileges, advantages, favours or immunities have been or may hereafter be accorded in the aforesaid islands by the Spanish Government to the Government or subjects of the German Empire shall be immediately and unconditionally accorded to the Government or subjects of Great Britain.

"Done at Madrid in duplicate, this 8th day of January 1886.

(L.S.) "FRANCIS CLARE FORD,  
(L.S.) "S. MORET."

—*Hertslet's Treaties and Conventions*, vol. xvii., p. 1019.

#### ANGLO-GERMAN DECLARATION.

*Signed at Berlin, 6th April 1886.*

"The Government of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Government of His Majesty the German Emperor, having resolved to define the limits of the British and German spheres of influence in the Western Pacific :—

"The undersigned, duly empowered for that purpose, viz. : (1) Sir Edward Baldwin Malet, Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary ; (2) Count Herbert Bismarck, His Imperial Majesty's Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, have agreed on behalf of their respective governments to make the following declaration :—

"1. For the purpose of this Declaration the expression 'Western Pacific' means that part of the Pacific Ocean lying between the 15th parallel of north latitude and the 30th parallel of south latitude, and between the 165th meridian of longitude west and the 130th meridian of longitude east of Greenwich.

"2. A conventional line of demarcation in the Western Pacific is agreed to, starting from the north-east coast of New Guinea, at a point near Mitre Rock on the 8th parallel of south latitude, being the boundary between the British and German possessions on that coast, and following that parallel to point A, and thence continuing to points B, C, D, E, F, and G, as indicated in the accompanying charts, which points are situated as follows :—

- |    |                        |                                   |
|----|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. | 8° south latitude,     | 154° longitude east of Greenwich. |
| B. | 7° 15' south latitude, | 155° 25' east longitude.          |
| C. | 7° 15' "               | 155° 35' "                        |
| D. | 7° 25' "               | 156° 40' "                        |
| E. | 8° 50' "               | 159° 50' "                        |
| F. | 6° north latitude,     | 173° 30' "                        |
| G. | 15° "                  | 173° 30' "                        |

The point A is indicated on the British Admiralty Chart 780 Pacific Ocean (South-west sheet): the points B, C, D, and E are indicated on the British Admiralty Chart 214 (South Pacific, Solomon Islands): and the points F and G on the British Admiralty Chart 781, Pacific Ocean (North-west sheet).

"3. Germany engages not to make acquisitions of territory, accept protectorates, or interfere with the extension of British influence, and to give up any acquisitions of territory or Protectorates already established in that part of the Western Pacific lying to the east, south-east, or south of the said conventional line.

"4. Great Britain engages not to make acquisitions of territory, accept protectorates, or interfere with the extension of German influence, and to give up any acquisitions of territory or protectorates already established in that part of the Western Pacific lying to the west, north-west, or north of the said conventional line.

"5. Should further surveys show that any islands, now indicated on the said charts as lying on one side of the said conventional line, are in reality on the other side, the said line shall be modified so that such islands shall appear on the same side of the line as at present shown on the said charts.

"6. This Declaration does not apply to the Navigator Islands (Samoa), which are affected by treaties with Great Britain, Germany, and the United States: nor to the Friendly Islands (Tonga), which are affected by treaties with Great Britain and Germany: nor to the island of Niué (Savage Island), which groups of islands shall continue to form a neutral region: nor to any islands or places in the Western Pacific which are now under the sovereignty or protection of any other civilised power than Great Britain or Germany.

"Declared and signed in duplicate at Berlin this 6th day of April, 1886.

(L.S.) "EDWARD B. MALET.

(L.S.) "GRAF BISMARCK."

—*Hertslet's Treaties and Conventions*, vol. xvii., p. 442.

## ANGLO-GERMAN DECLARATION ON RECIPROCITY

*Signed at Berlin, 10th April 1886.*

"The Government of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Government of His Majesty the German Emperor, having resolved to guarantee to each other, so soon as the British and German spheres of influence in the Western Pacific have been demarcated, reciprocal freedom of trade and commerce in their possessions and protectorates within the limits specified in the present declaration, the undersigned Sir Edward Baldwin Malet, Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, and Count Herbert Bismarck, His Imperial Majesty's Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, having been duly empowered to that effect, have agreed on behalf of their respective governments to make the following declaration:—

"Article 1.—For the purpose of this Declaration the expression 'Western Pacific' means that part of the Pacific Ocean lying between

the 15th parallel of north latitude, and the 30th parallel of south latitude, and between the 165th meridian of longitude west, and the 130th meridian of longitude east of Greenwich.

“*Article 2.*—The Government of Her Britannic Majesty and the Government of His Majesty the Emperor agree that the subjects of either state shall be free to resort to all the possessions or protectorates of the other state in the Western Pacific, and to settle there, and to acquire and to hold all kinds of property, and to engage in all descriptions of trade and professions, and agricultural and industrial undertakings, subject to the same conditions and laws, and enjoying the same religious freedom and the same protection and privileges as the subjects of the sovereign or protecting state.

“*Article 3.*—In all the British and German possessions and protectorates in the Western Pacific, the ships of both states shall in all respects reciprocally enjoy equal treatment as well as most-favoured nation treatment, and merchandise of whatever origin imported by the subjects of either state, under whatever flag, shall not be liable to any other or higher duties than that imported by the subjects of the other state or of any third power.

“*Article 4.*—All disputed claims to land alleged to have been acquired by a British subject in a German possession or protectorate, or by a German subject in a British possession or protectorate, prior to the proclamation of sovereignty or of protectorate by either of the two governments, shall be examined and decided by a mixed commission, to be nominated for that purpose by the two governments. The claim may, however, be settled by the local authority alone if the claimant to the land makes formal application to that effect.

“*Article 5.*—Both governments engage not to establish any penal settlements in, or to transport convicts to, the Western Pacific.

“*Article 6.*—In this declaration the words ‘possessions and protectorates in the Western Pacific’ shall not include the colonies which now have fully constituted governments and legislatures.”

“The present declaration shall take effect from the date of its signature.

“Declared and signed in duplicate at Berlin this 10th day of April 1886.

(L.S.) “EDWARD B. MALET.

(L.S.) “GRAF BISMARCK.”

—*Hertslet's Treaties and Conventions*, vol. xvii., p. 443.

## NEW HEBRIDES CONVENTION, 1887.

16th November 1887.

“The Government of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Government of the French Republic, being desirous to abrogate the Declaration of the 19th June 1847, relative to the islands leeward of Tahiti, and also to make pro-

vision for the future protection of life and property in the New Hebrides, have agreed upon the following articles:—

“*Article I.*—The Government of Her Britannic Majesty consent to proceed to the abrogation of the Declaration of 1847, relative to the islands to the leeward of Tahiti, as soon as the agreement hereinafter contained for the future protection of life and property in the New Hebrides by means of a Joint Commission shall have been carried out.

“*Article II.*—A Joint Naval Commission shall be immediately constituted, composed of British and French naval officers on the Pacific Station, charged with the duty of maintaining order, and of protecting the lives and property of British subjects and French citizens in the New Hebrides.

“*Article III.*—A Declaration to that effect shall be signed by the two Governments.

“*Article IV.*—The regulations for the guidance of the Commission shall be drawn up by the two Governments, approved by them, and transmitted to the Commanders of the British and French ships on the Pacific Naval Station within a period not exceeding four months from the date of the signature of the present Convention, should it be impossible to do so earlier.

“*Article V.*—Immediately on the approval of those Regulations by the two Governments, and the consequent withdrawal of the French military posts from the New Hebrides, the Government of Her Britannic Majesty will proceed to the abrogation of the Declaration of 1847. It is understood that the assurances relating to trade and to convicts, which are contained in the *note verbale* of the 24th October 1885, communicated by M. de Freycinet to Lord Lyons shall remain in full force.”

[Signed by Mr Edwin Henry Egerton and M. Flourens at Paris.]

*Extract from note verbale referred to in Article V.*

“Il (le Gouvernement Français) renouvelle volontiers au Gouvernement de la Reine l'assurance que le régime douanier qui sera institué aux îles sous le vent de Tahiti le jour, où l'autorité Française y aura été définitivement établie, ne différera pas de celui qui est en vigueur à Tahiti même, et que les sujets Britanniques y jouiront du même traitement que ses propres nationaux.

“D'autre part, M. de Freycinet ne fait aucune difficulté de déclarer que le Gouvernement de la République n'est pas dans l'intention de se départir, à l'égard de Raïatéa et des îles adjacentes, de la conduite qu'il a tenue jusqu'à présent en ce qui concerne l'envoi de condamnés dans ses possessions de Tahiti.”

[A further declaration establishing the Joint Naval Commission and making regulations for its guidance was signed at Paris on 26th January 1888 by Lord Lytton and M. Flourens.]



## THE SAMOA CONVENTION.

14th November 1899.

[A Convention and Declaration between Great Britain and Germany, for the settlement of the Samoan and other questions.]

"The Commissioners of the three Powers concerned having in their report of the 18th July last expressed the opinion, based on a thorough examination of the situation, that it would be impossible effectually to remedy the troubles and difficulties under which the islands of Samoa are at present suffering so long as they are placed under the joint administration of the three Governments, it appears desirable to seek for a solution which shall put an end to these difficulties, while taking due account of the legitimate interests of the three Governments.

"Starting from this point of view the Undersigned, furnished with full powers to that effect by their respective Sovereigns, have agreed on the following points :—

"*Article I.*—Great Britain renounces in favour of Germany all her rights over the islands of Upolu and of Savaii, including the right of establishing a naval and coaling station there, and her right of extra-territoriality in these islands.

"Great Britain similarly renounces, in favour of the United States of America, all her rights over the island of Tutuila and the other islands of the Samoan group east of  $171^{\circ}$  longitude east (? west) of Greenwich.

"Great Britain recognises as falling to Germany the territories in the eastern part of the neutral zone established by the Arrangement of 1888 in West Africa. The limits of the portion of the neutral zone falling to Germany are defined in Article V. of the present Convention.

"*Article II.*—Germany renounces in favour of Great Britain all her rights over the Tonga Islands, including Vavau, and over Savage Island, including the right of establishing a naval station and coaling station, and the right of extra-territoriality in the said islands.

"Germany similarly renounces, in favour of the United States of America, all her rights over the island of Tutuila and over the other islands of the Samoan group east of longitude  $171^{\circ}$  east (? west) of Greenwich.

"She recognises as falling to Great Britain those of the Solomon Islands, at present belonging to Germany, which are situated to the east and south-east of the island of Bougainville, which latter shall continue to belong to Germany, together with the island of Buka, which forms part of it.

"The western portion of the neutral zone in West Africa, as defined in Article V. of the present Convention, shall also fall to the share of Great Britain.

"*Article III.*—The Consuls of the two Powers at Apia and in the Tonga Islands shall be provisionally recalled.

"The two Governments will come to an agreement with regard to the arrangements to be made during the interval in the interest of their navigation and of their commerce in Samoa and Tonga.

"*Article IV.*—The arrangement at present existing between Germany and Great Britain and concerning the right of Germany to freely engage labourers in the Solomon Islands belonging to Great Britain shall be



equally extended to those of the Solomon Islands mentioned in Article II., which fall to the share of Great Britain.

*Article V.*—In the neutral zone the frontier between German and English territories shall be formed by the river Daka as far as the point of its intersection with the 9th degree of north latitude, thence the frontier shall continue to the north, leaving Morozugu to Great Britain, and shall be fixed on the spot by a Mixed Commission of the two Powers, in such manner that Gambaga and all the territories of Mamprusi shall fall to Great Britain and that Yendi and all the territories of Chakosi shall fall to Germany.

*Article VI.*—Germany is prepared to take into consideration, as much and as far as possible, the wishes which the Government of Great Britain may express with regard to the development of the reciprocal tariffs in the territories of Togo and of the Gold Coast.

*Article VII.*—Germany renounces her rights of extra-territoriality in Zanzibar, but it is at the same time understood that this renunciation shall not effectively come into force till such time as the rights of extra-territoriality enjoyed there by other nations shall be abolished.”

DECLARATION, signed 14th November 1899.

“It is clearly understood that by Article II. of the Convention signed to-day Germany consents that the whole group of the Howe Islands, which forms part of the Solomon Islands, shall fall to Great Britain.

“It is also understood that the stipulations of the Declaration between the two Governments signed at Berlin on the 10th April 1886, respecting freedom of commerce in the Western Pacific, apply to the islands mentioned in the aforesaid Convention.

“It is similarly understood that the arrangement at present in force as to the engagement of labourers by Germans in the Solomon Islands permits Germans to engage those labourers on the same conditions as those which are or which shall be imposed on British subjects non-resident in those islands.”

[The Convention and Declaration were signed by the Marquess of Salisbury and Count P. Hatzfeldt.]

—P.P., Cd. 7.

## THE SAMOA TRIPARTITE CONVENTION.

*Signed at Washington, 2nd December 1899.*

“Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India : His Imperial Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia : and the President of the United States of America, desiring to adjust amicably the questions which have arisen between them in respect to the Samoan group of islands, as well as to avoid all future misunderstanding in respect to their joint or several rights and claims of possession or jurisdiction therein, have agreed to establish and regulate the same by a special convention : and whereas the Governments of Great Britain and Germany have, with the concurrence of that of the United States, made an agreement regarding their respective rights and interests in the aforesaid group, the three Powers before named, in furtherance of the ends above mentioned, have appointed respectively their plenipotentiaries as follows :—

"Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, the Right Honourable Lord Pauncefoot of Preston, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary :

"His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia, His Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Herr von Holleben : and

"The President of the United States of America, the Honourable John Hay, Secretary of State of the United States :

"Who, after having communicated each to the other their respective full powers, which were found to be in proper form, have agreed upon and concluded the following articles :

"*Article I.*—The General Act concluded and signed by the aforesaid Powers at Berlin on the 14th day of June, A.D. 1889, and all previous Treaties, Conventions, and Agreements relating to Samoa are annulled.

"*Article II.*—Great Britain renounces in favour of the United States of America all her rights and claims over and in respect to the island of Tutuila and all other islands of the Samoan group east of longitude 171° west of Greenwich.

"Germany in like manner renounces in favour of the United States of America all her rights and claims over and in respect to the island of Tutuila and all other islands of the Samoan group east of longitude 171° west of Greenwich.

"Reciprocally the United States of America renounce in favour of Germany all their rights and claims over and in respect to the islands of Upolu and Savaii, and all other islands of the Samoan group west of longitude 171° west of Greenwich.

"*Article III.*—It is understood and agreed that each of the three Signatory Powers shall continue to enjoy, in respect to their commerce and commercial vessels, in all the islands of the Samoan group, privileges and conditions equal to those enjoyed by the Sovereign Power in all ports which may be open to the commerce of either of them."—P.P., Cd. 39.

## THE ENTENTE CORDIALE DECLARATION.

*London, 8th April 1904.*

[A Declaration between the United Kingdom and France concerning Siam, Madagascar and the New Hebrides.]

### NEW HEBRIDES

"*Article III.*—The two Governments agree to draw up in concert an arrangement which, without involving any modification of the political *status quo*, shall put an end to the difficulties arising from the absence of jurisdiction over the natives of the New Hebrides.

"They agree to appoint a Commission to settle the disputes of their respective nationals in the said islands with regard to landed property. The competency of this Commission and its rules of procedure shall form the subject of a preliminary Agreement between the two Governments."

[Signed by Lord Lansdowne and M. Paul Cambon.]

—P.P., Cd. 2385.

## NEW HEBRIDES CONVENTION.

*London, 20th October 1906.*

*Article I.—Status.*

"1. The Group of the New Hebrides, including the Banks and Torres Islands, shall form a region of joint influence, in which the subjects and citizens of the two Signatory Powers shall enjoy equal rights of residence, personal protection and trade, each of the two Powers retaining jurisdiction over its subjects or citizens and neither exercising a separate control over the Group.

"2. The subjects or citizens of other Powers shall enjoy the same rights and shall be subject to the same obligations as British subjects or French citizens. They must choose within six months between the legal systems of one of the two Powers. Failing such choice, the High Commissioners mentioned in Article II. or their Delegates shall decide under which system they shall be placed.

"3. In all matters not contrary to the provisions of the present Convention or the regulations made thereunder, the subjects and citizens of the two Signatory Powers and the subjects and citizens of other Powers shall, within the New Hebrides, remain subject to the fullest extent to the laws of their respective countries.

"4. The two Signatory Powers undertake not to erect fortifications in the Group and not to establish penal settlements of any kind."

*Article II.—Local Authorities—Police.*

"1. The Signatory Powers shall be represented in the Group by two High Commissioners, one appointed by His Britannic Majesty's Government, the other by the Government of the French Republic.

"2. The High Commissioners shall each be assisted by a Resident Commissioner, to whom they shall delegate their respective powers, in so far as they consider it expedient, and who shall represent them in the Group when they do not reside there.

"3. The High Commissioners or their Delegates shall be provided with a police force of sufficient strength to guarantee effectively the protection of life and property.

"4. The force shall be divided into two divisions of equal strength. Each of these two divisions shall be under the orders of one of the two Resident Commissioners, and shall in no case be employed otherwise than in conformity with the principles laid down by the present Convention.

"5. When it is necessary to employ some or all of both divisions of the Force in conformity with the present Convention or of the regulations framed for its execution, the force shall be under the joint direction of the High Commissioners or their Delegates."

*Article XVIII.—Official Languages.*

"Either the English or French language may be employed in proceedings before the Joint Court. In a suit between British subjects and French citizens, the proceedings shall be interpreted and the judgments shall be drawn up in both languages. The registers of the Court shall be kept in both languages."

*Article XXVIII.—Vessels registered in the Group.*

"1. No vessels other than those intended to sail under the flag of one of the two Signatory Powers shall be registered in the Group of the New Hebrides, including the Banks and Torres Islands.

"2. Each High Commissioner shall prescribe the regulations affecting the navigation in the Group of the vessels sailing under the flag of the Power which he represents.

"3. The High Commissioners, the Resident Commissioners, and the persons appointed for the purpose shall, with regard to vessels sailing in the Group under the flag of the Power which they represent, exercise respectively the supervision, protection and policing necessary to ensure the carrying out of these regulations without prejudice to the rights to which the vessels of that Power are legally entitled."

*Article XXXI.—Recruiting License.*

"1. No vessel shall recruit native labourers in the New Hebrides, including the Banks and Torres Islands, unless she sails under the flag of one of the two Signatory Powers, and unless she is provided with a recruiting license issued by the High Commissioner representing the Signatory Power under whose flag the vessel is sailing, or by his Delegate."

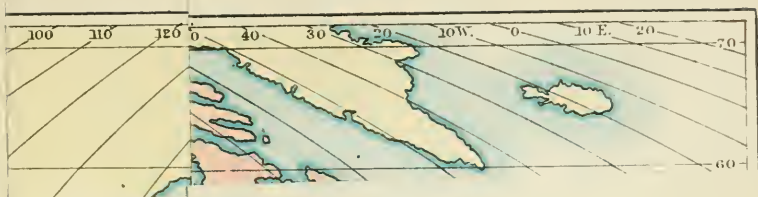
*Article LXII.—Establishment of Municipalities.*

"1. Municipalities may be established in the Group, on the application of the non-native inhabitants.

"2. Applications for the establishment of municipalities shall be addressed to one or other of the High Commissioners or their Delegates. The latter shall communicate such requests to one another, and determine jointly what action shall be taken thereon.

"3. Applications made by a group of not less than thirty non-native adult inhabitants residing in the same district shall be, as far as possible, complied with."

[The Convention contains 68 articles, many of them devoted to providing an elaborate system of protection for native labourers. It is signed by Sir Edward Grey and M. Paul Cambon (P.P., Cd. 3300). The arrangements for the Joint Court provided for in Article X. are embodied in an exchange of Notes dated 29th August 1907 (PP., Cd. 3876).]



- 1815 M. Baranoff sends Dr Scheffer to Hawaii from Sitka.  
 1817 First English act of police for the Pacific (57 Geo. III., c 53).  
 1819 Tahitian code adopted.  
 Death of Kamehameha I., conqueror of Hawaii.





- British Possessions
- Protectorate
- New Zealand extended Boundaries
- Condominium (French & British)
- French Possessions
- German
- Dutch
- U.S.A.

# CHRONOLOGY

*Secretaries of State for the Colonies in Black Type.*

- 1511 Discoveries—New Guinea, by de Abreu.
- 1521 Philippines and Marianne Islands, by Magellan.
- 1527 Carolines, by Vasco da Rocha.
- 1529 Marshall Islands, by Alvaro de Saavedra.
- 1555 Hawaii, by Gaetano.
- 1567 Solomon Islands, by Mendana.
- 1593 Falkland Islands, by Richard Hawkins.
- 1606 New Hebrides, by Quiros.
- 1642 New Zealand, by Tasman.
- 1643 Tonga, by Tasman.
- 1767 Tahiti, by Captain Wallis.
- Pitcairn, by Captain Carteret.
- 1768 Samoa, by Bougainville.
- 1790 Chatham Islands, by Lieutenant Broughton.
- 1806 Auckland Islands, by Captain Bristow.
- 1565 Spanish expedition from Mexico conquers Philippines.
- 1606 Torres takes possession of New Guinea for Spain.
- 1767 Captain Wallis takes possession of Tahiti ; Captain Carteret of New Britain.
- 1780 *Bounty* mutineers reach Pitcairn.
- 1788 Penal settlement founded at Botany Bay, N.S.W.
- 1789 Nootka affair ; 1790 Nootka Convention.
- 1792 Captain Bligh takes possession of islands in Torres Straits.
- 1793 New Guinea taken possession of, for George III.
- 1794 Hawaii offers sovereignty to England ; 25th February, Lieutenant Puget takes possession (not ratified).
- 1795 Foundation of London Missionary Society.
- 1796 L.M.S. ship *Duff* sails.
- 1797 Roman Catholic Mission reaches Tahiti from Peru, before L.M.S. expelled from Marquesas Islands.
- 1798 British possession of Tasmania asserted.
- 1799 Russian American Company founded.
- 1809 L.M.S. compelled to leave Tahiti.
- 1812 Pomare II. of Tahiti baptised.
- Russian settlement founded at Ross, California.
- 1814 Missionary Association of Picpus founded in Paris.
- Rev. Samuel Marsden lands in New Zealand.
- 1815 M. Baranoff sends Dr Scheffer to Hawaii from Sitka.
- 1817 First English act of police for the Pacific (57 Geo. III., c 53).
- 1819 Tahitian code adopted.
- Death of Kamehameha I., conqueror of Hawaii.

- 1820 American missionaries land in Hawaii.  
Raiatea code adopted.
- 1821 Tzar claims North American coast southwards to Vancouver Island.  
North-West Company merged in Hudson Bay Company.
- 1822 George IV. presents schooner to King of Hawaii, who offers the  
sovereignty to England
- 1824 Tahitian Parliament meets at Matavai.  
King and Queen of Hawaii die while visiting England.  
Imperial Act, c. 96, extends jurisdiction of Supreme Court of  
New South Wales.  
Convention between Russia and United States fixing boundary  
at 54° 40'.
- Port Essington settlement formed (evacuated 1829).
- 1825 Canning Convention with Russia.  
British Consul appointed to Hawaii.  
Queen Pomare of Tahiti seeks British protection.
- 1826 Wesleyan Mission in Tonga.  
Reciprocity between Hawaii and United States.  
Apostolic Prefect of Sandwich Islands appointed
- 1827 Raffles Bay settlement formed.
- 1828 Dutch establish Fort Dubus in New Guinea (abandoned 1835).  
Tongan Christians arrive in Samoa.
- 1829 H M.S. *Satellite* submits regulations for Huahine.  
Sovereignty asserted at Swan River, W.A.
- 1830 King George of Tonga converted.  
**Viscount Goderich** (afterwards **Lord Ripon**).
- 1831 Roman Catholic priests banished from Hawaii.  
King of Prussia sends gifts to King of Hawaii.
- 1833 **E. G. Stanley** (afterwards **Lord Derby**).  
James Busby appointed British Resident in New Zealand.  
American Mission expelled from Marquesas.  
Great Britain occupies Falkland Islands.
- 1834 **Thos. Spring Rice** (afterwards **Lord Monteagle**).  
**Lord Aberdeen**.
- 1835 Roman Catholics return to Hawaii.  
Wesleyans arrive in Fiji.  
Charles Darwin in the Pacific.  
Declaration of Independence of Maori chiefs (N.Z.).  
**Charles Grant** (afterwards **Lord Glenelg**).
- 1836 Roman Catholics refused admission at Tahiti.  
Tahitian appeal for British protection.
- 1837 Franco-Hawaiian Treaty.
- 1838 Tahiti accepts French ultimatum ; appeals to England.  
Anti-Catholic law passed.  
Treaty with France.
- 1839 United States exploring expedition in Pacific.  
Captain Hobson R.N., appointed consul to New Zealand.  
Tahiti : Anti-Catholic law repealed.  
Hawaii : Declaration of Rights.  
Wesleyans retire from Samoa.  
Nanto-Bordelaise Company formed in France to colonise New  
Zealand.  
Charter of the Colony of New Zealand granted.  
**Marquess of Normanby**.  
**Lord John Russell**

- 1840 Liberal constitution in Hawaii.  
British sovereignty in New Zealand ; Treaty of Waitangi.  
Captain Croker, R.N., killed in Tonga.  
French emigrants at Akaroa.
- 1841 **Lord Stanley** (afterwards **Earl of Derby**).
- 1842 France annexes Marquesas.  
Ross (California) sold to United States.  
United States recognises independence of Hawaii.
- 1843 Roman Catholic diocese of Arathea (Hawaii) founded.  
French protectorate in Tahiti.  
Lord Paulet's government in Hawaii ; Hawaiian independence recognised.  
German emigration to Nelson (N.Z.).  
French mission in New Caledonia.
- 1844 Arrest and deportation of Mr Pritchard, late consul in Tahiti.
- 1845 **W. E. Gladstone**.
- 1846 Captain King, R.N., reports to N.S.W. Parliament on Panama route.  
Anglo-Hawaiian Treaty.  
Lieutenant Yule, R.N., takes possession of New Guinea.  
Oregon Treaty fixes Canadian-United States boundary at 49th parallel.  
**Earl Grey**.
- 1847 Anglo-French Declaration *re* Raiatea, etc.  
Labour traffic in islands first reported.
- 1848 Tongan Christians under Maaфу land in Fiji.  
Sir George Grey recommends proffered protectorate of Fiji and Tonga.
- 1849 Southern Whale Fishery Company to colonise Auckland Islands.  
Admiral Fromelin (French) occupies Hawaiian forts.  
Hawaii-United States reciprocity treaty.
- 1850 Hawaiian Society for Foreign Missions formed.  
Vancouver Colony established.  
Melanesian Mission decided on.
- 1851 Hawaiian commercial treaty with Great Britain.  
French land in New Caledonia.
- 1852 **Sir John Pakington** (afterwards **Lord Hampton**).  
Auckland Islands evacuated by Enderby's company.  
**Duke of Newcastle**.
- 1853 French annex Gambier Islands and New Caledonia.  
Hawaiian missionaries established in Marquesas.
- 1854 Anglo-Japanese Treaty.  
**Sir George Grey, Bart.**
- 1855 **Sidney Herbert** (afterwards **Lord Herbert**).  
**Lord John Russell**.  
**Sir William Molesworth**.  
**Henry Labouchere** (afterwards **Lord Taunton**).
- 1856 Pitcairn islanders removed to Norfolk Island.
- 1857 W. T. Pritchard consul at Fiji.  
J. C. Godeffroy & Sons (Hamburg) commence trading at Apia.
- 1858 Abortive annexation of Raiatea by United States.  
Fijian chiefs seek British sovereignty (offer renewed in 1859).  
**Lord Stanley**.  
**Sir E. Bulwer Lytton**
- 1859 **Duke of Newcastle**.

- 1861 Colonel W. J. Smythe, R.A., advises declining sovereignty of Fiji.
- 1861 Indenturing of coolies for Queensland approved.  
John C. Patteson consecrated Bishop of Melanesia.
- 1863 Hawaiian Church declared independent.  
Captain Towns imports kanakas for Queensland plantations.
- 1864 Cook Islands desire annexation.  
**Edward** (afterwards **Viscount**) **Cardwell**.
- 1865 Thakombau grants charter to whites of Ovalau (Fiji).
- 1866 **Earl of Carnarvon**.
- 1867 Company formed in Sydney to colonise New Guinea (Imperial Government refuses sanction).  
United States purchases Alaska.  
**Duke of Buckingham and Chandos**.
- 1868 Queensland Polynesian Labourers Act assented to.  
Polynesian Company formed in Melbourne to develop Fiji.  
**Lord Granville**.
- 1870 Native government set up in Levuka (Fiji).  
Colonial Conference at Melbourne demand annexation of Fiji ; declined by  
**Lord Kimberley**.
- 1871 Bishop Patteson murdered by natives at Nukapu.  
Thakombau's constitution inaugurated.  
German consul appointed at Apia (Samoa).
- 1872 Pacific Islanders Protection Act (Imperial).  
Fijian Parliament passes native poll-tax.
- 1873 Commodore Goodenough and Mr E. L. Layard appointed a commission on Fiji.  
Captain J. Moresby, R.N., annexes Basilisk, Hayter, and Moresby Islands, New Guinea.
- 1874 **Lord Carnarvon**.  
Goodenough Commission recommends annexing Fiji ; October : sovereignty proclaimed.  
Australasian Mission established in New Britain.
- 1875 Reciprocity Treaty between Hawaii and United States.  
Pacific Islanders Act amended establishing High Commission for Western Pacific.  
Spain claims sovereignty over Caroline Islands.  
Queensland demands annexation of New Guinea (refused).
- 1876 Sir Arthur Gordon (afterwards Lord Stanmore) appointed High Commissioner.  
Vogel's scheme of Pacific government.
- 1877 Survey of Blanche Bay, New Britain, by Germans.  
German treaty with Samoa.
- 1878 United States' rights at Pagopago acquired by treaty with Samoa.  
Anglo-French agreement to recognise independence of New Hebrides.  
Germany acquires rights at Jaluit (Marshall Islands).  
Gold discovered in New Guinea.  
**Sir Michael Hicks-Beach** (afterwards **Lord St Aldwyn**).
- 1879 German rights in Samoa by treaty ; Anglo-Samoan treaty ;  
Apia Convention.  
Indenturing of Hindus for Fiji approved.  
Deputy Commissioner appointed at Rotuma.  
J. C. Godeffroy & Sons in reconstruction.



- 1879 German rights at Tonga by treaty ; Anglo-Tongan Treaty.  
Marquis de Ray's expedition to New Ireland.
- 1880 Hawaiian federation scheme.  
**Lord Kimberley.**  
France annexes Tahiti.  
Jaluit company formed to develop Marshall Islands.
- 1881 Britain annexes Rotuma.  
Rev. S. W. Baker, Prime Minister of Tonga.
- 1882 **Lord Derby.**  
Kolonialverein formed in Germany.
- 1883 April : Queensland annexes New Guinea (disallowed).  
December : Intercolonial Convention in Sydney ; genesis of  
Australian federation.  
Anglo-French understanding *re* New Hebrides renewed.
- 1884 High Commissioner forbids traffic in arms.  
German consul in New Britain.  
Conversations between Granville and Count Munster.  
6th November : British New Guinea protectorate declared.  
December : Germany annexes remainder of New Guinea and  
Bismarck archipelago.
- 1885 Sulu protocol—Spain, Germany, and Great Britain.  
Delimitation of New Guinea boundaries.  
German flag hoisted at Yap (Caroline Islands).  
June : **Col. Sir F. A. Stanley** (afterwards **Lord Derby**).  
Franco-German agreement on spheres.  
Completion of Canadian Pacific Railway.  
Recidiviste Bill passed by French Parliament.
- 1886 **Lord Granville.**  
Anglo-German agreement on spheres.  
French military posts in New Hebrides.  
American port of call in Tonga by treaty.  
Commissioners in Samoa.  
**Edward Stanhope.**
- 1887 **Sir H. T. Holland** (afterwards **Lord Knutsford**).  
France occupies Wallis Island.  
Persecutions in Tonga.  
War in Samoa ; Germany deports Malietoa and appoints  
Tamasese king.  
Anglo-French Convention for New Hebrides (Joint Naval  
Commission).
- 1888 Great Britain annexes Fanning, Christmas, Penrhyn, and  
Suwarrow islands, for cable stations.  
New Guinea declared a separate possession ; Sir William  
Macgregor first administrator.  
Declaration of 1847 abrogated.
- 1889 German and American warships lost in hurricane at Apia  
(Samoa), 15th to 16th March ; H.M.S. *Calliope* alone escapes.  
Berlin Conference on Samoa.
- 1890 Queensland ceases employment of kanakas.  
Shirley W. Baker deported from Tonga.
- 1892 Queensland resumes kanaka traffic for limited period.  
**Marquess of Ripon.**
- 1893 Queen of Hawaii deposed by American Hawaiians.  
Great Britain annexes Solomon Islands.  
Death of King George Tubou I. of Tonga.

- 1894 Republic proclaimed in Hawaii.  
 1895 Dutch and British boundary in New Guinea fixed.  
**Joseph Chamberlain.**  
 1896 Great Britain annexes Gilbert Islands.  
 1897 Great Britain annexes Ellice Islands.  
 United States treaty of annexation with Hawaii.  
 1898 Spanish American War.  
 Hawaii annexed by United States.  
 Spain cedes Philippines and Guam to United States.  
 War in Samoa.  
 1899 Germany purchases Caroline, Pelew, and Marianne Islands from Spain.  
 Survey for Pacific cable commenced.  
 November : Samoa Convention ; Great Britain withdraws.  
 Germany obtains Savaii and Upolu and cedes Solomon Islands of Ysabel and Choiseul ; United States obtains Tutuila.  
 1900 German flag in Samoa.  
 Hawaii becomes a territory of the United States.  
 Ocean Island absorbed in Gilbert and Ellice.  
 British protectorate of Tonga ; annexation of Niue.  
 1901 1st January : Australian Commonwealth comes into existence.  
 Cook Islands and Niue become part of New Zealand.  
 Kanaka labour forbidden by Australian law.  
 1902 Anglo-Japanese Alliance.  
 Pacific cable opened.  
 1903 October : **A. Lyttelton.**  
 1904 *Entente Cordiale* understanding with France.  
 1905 Jaluit shipping dispute.  
 December : **Lord Elgin.**  
 1906 New Hebrides Convention ; establishment of the Condominium.  
 New Zealand raised to dignity of "Dominion."  
 1908 Administration of Gilbert and Ellice transferred to Ocean Island.  
 April : **Lord Crewe.**  
 1910 November : **Lewis Harcourt.**  
 1914 New Zealand expedition occupies Samoa.  
 Australian forces occupy Kaiser Wilhelmsland and Bismarck.  
 1915 French colony of Wallis and Horne Islands founded.  
**A. Bonar Law.**  
 1917 **Walter Long.**  
 1918 King George Tubou II. of Tonga dies.  
 1919 New Zealand entrusted by League of Nations with mandate to govern Samoa ; Australia to govern German New Guinea and Bismarck.  
 January : **Lord Milner.**

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